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I N S I D E

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Local

Comedian Navarette doubles-up Saipan

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Wild laughter and frequent applause filled the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach’s Hibiscus Hall on Saturday night as Filipino-American comedian Rex Navarette performed for some 500 people, joking about the Filipino mentality, immigrant experience, and his mother.

Following a short pre-show by Guam’s amateur comedy series champion Frank Rios, Navarette took the stage with nothing but a bottle of water. For the next hour and a half, he brought to life his famous characters, from his ESL [“English as a Stupid Language”] teacher Mrs. Scott to his Irish high school friend Brian and to his Uncle [or “Tito”] Boy.

Navarette humored the crowd with his stories about his early years in the San Francisco Bay Area, knowing only one English sentence, and having his grandfather for a babysitter. He also told hilarious jokes about the Filipino accent and the many “similarities” between the Irish and the Filipino peoples. [“The Irish were butchered by the English; us



Filipinos butcher English.”] In fact, his mother and her own prejudice against Filipinos have provided Navarette with most of his material for his lampooning and often irreverent routines.

He made fun of his mother’s strange pieces of advice whenever he went traveling to the Philippines: blink your eyes only twice a day so kidnappers won’t think you’re Chinese, and surround yourself with *chicharon* to keep the Muslim extremists away.

Navarette went on to comment on the practice of Filipinos, or Asians for that matter, of using their bare hands for eating. “Quoting” his mother, Navarette posed the question: “If I used my hand to eat rice at home, I’m Third World; but if I ate at McDonald’s and used my hand to pick French Fries, I’m First World?”

In an interview after the show, Navarette said he had fun performing for the Saipan crowd, which has been receptive to his comedy.

“The audience was excellent. I don’t know if you guys get stand up comedy here often, but it was really nice to perform for the first time here in front of a fresh audience. The people just let go of a lot of stuff,” said Navarette, who has been in the entertainment busi-

ness for 15 years now. He said he tries to make his routine universal to get more people to connect with his jokes. The immigrant experience, he said, is one good example of a universal theme.

“Everyone has immigrant experience, making some kind of transition to a new land. There’s a lot of comedy you can find in adjusting and discrimination,” he said.

While he normally has a working script for his acts, Navarette leaves room for spontaneity during his performances.

“I write down ideas, but I don’t necessarily script them all out. I just kind of like use the stage as my work-in-progress board. If [a joke] is good, I keep it. I remember it for the next time and develop it some more. The routines sometimes come on stage, or when you’re walking around, getting some groceries or just observing people,” he said.

Navarette started doing stand up comedy at age 19. In his trade, he has found a venue to comment on things that otherwise would not be mentioned.

“I guess it is my mission to showcase Filipino life and the mind of the Filipino. We’re beyond the United States now. We’re everywhere; we’re really part of the world,” Navarette said.

Nevertheless, he said he

does not claim to be able to reach every Filipino through his comedy. He noted that there are some Filipinos who actually find offensive or insulting the things he talks about on stage.

“They’d say, ‘You’re on stage with an accent; we don’t have an accent.’ But yes, we do and it’s okay. You’re the one discriminating against yourself when you start teaching Filipinos to be ashamed,” Navarette said. “That is the sound of my characters. I’m not going to fake it or make it cheap. I’m going to give you the real sound.”

And what does his mother think? “At first, she found me very offensive. But now that I’ve become ‘famous’ in her eyes and her friends’ eyes, she’s accepting it,” he replied. He added that the prejudice against Filipinos he portrays on stage signifies not so much his mother’s own attitude on how Filipinos in general think of their fellowmen.

Organizer Nathan Sablan described Budweiser’s Rxxx Rated Comedy Show as very successful. He said Marpac, which distributes the beer brand in the CNMI, plans to bring more comedy acts to the island.

Other sponsors were Continental Airlines, Dai-Ichi Hotel, Aquarius Beach Tower, Budget Rental Car, Coca Cola, Power 99, and The Rock.

verizon
cmyk

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed photos of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details for description of the event, location of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place, the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the date of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to islandphotos@saipantribune.com. To check if contributions are received, call 223-6207, 223-3446, or 223-4743.

PHI

lottery

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hardt eye


pierce
+RED




WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




PALAU
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.






















KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.



CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
 Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
 Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
 London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
 New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
 Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
 Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)

JOETEN MOTORS
+BLUE

FHB

House passes recycling deposit bill

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Saying it would significantly help reduce solid waste and littering in the CNMI, the House of Representatives passed last week a bill mandating a deposit fee of not less than 5 cents and a payout for each beverage sold.

Lawmakers passed House Bill 14-211 or the proposed Recycling Deposit Fee and Payout Program Act of 2004, authored by Rep. Janet Maratita.

The House Ways and Means Committee said in a report that 50 percent of litter is comprised

of used beverage containers.

“Providing a payout incentive such as a recycling deposit fee and a payout program will deter and reduce littering,” said the committee, chaired by Rep. Norman S. Palacios.

Under the bill, a deposit fee of not less than 5 cents shall be levied and paid by the consumer on each beverage container purchased in the CNMI.

Upon return, at least 75 percent of the amount of the refund value shall be paid back to the consumer.

The refund is claimed from redemption centers, which can be set up by any individual upon approval of the Division

of Environmental Quality.

The bill provides that dealers shall remit all deposits collected each month to the CNMI Treasury under the “recycling deposit fund.” The funds collected would be used as reimbursement for refunded amounts and for expenses related to redemption centers’ activities.

Reverse vending machines may be used by redemption centers provided that the machine shall accept one or more types of empty deposit beverage containers and shall pay out appropriate refunds as coins or via a redeemable credit slip.

GLUSHKOS

DCCA learns the ropes on dealing with conflict

Conflict is a necessary and healthy part of the life of all organizations. The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs learned the truth of that statement at a personal development workshop on “Improved Communications” sponsored by the DCCA Division of Youth Services earlier this month.

The workshop, facilitated by Dr. Ken Shankweiler, elaborated on the importance of good communication skills in the workplace. The daylong training consisted of various group activities and discussions on the basic skills of communication and steps in dealing with conflict.

“The purpose of presenting this workshop on communication was to strengthen our staff’s understanding, skills, and provide them the tools needed when dealing with conflict,” said DYS director Victor Mesta. “As the end product, DYS and the department will be better prepared to obtain its goals and objectives.”

According to Shankweiler, how well a person communicates with people determines what he or she will become in life, personality-wise. As part of the training, participants were reminded to use simple language, to ask for feedback, to think about the receiver of the communication, and to focus on what the receiver needs and wants to know.

“The workshop taught me to be more patient and more understanding toward my co-workers’ needs,” said Genevieve Deleon Guerrero of the DCCA Office of the Secretary. “I also learned that just the way people look and say things also expresses how they really feel, and when others are already mad, I shouldn’t get mad because it only causes more stress.”

In resolving conflict, Shank-

weiler teaches that team leaders must focus on the objective facts, area of needs, and mutual goals; ask for possible solutions from both parties to resolve conflict; have both parties agree on solution; and set up a review. It’s a process that Juvenile Correction Worker I Ricardo R. Rasa plans to implement in his work at the DYS Juvenile Correction and Detention Unit.

“For our job in this field

working with the kids, we learned new skills on how to not let any conflict escalate,” said Rasa. “Even with co-workers, we learned how to deal with staff and control conflicts through procedures.”

The workshop was held at the Hyatt Regency Saipan and was participated in by several DCCA divisions: the Division of Youth Services, Office on Aging, Nutrition Assistance Program, and the Office of the Secretary.

CARS UNLIMITED

Business

Supreme Court to hear ISP, cable dispute

By HOPE YEN
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court agreed Friday to consider whether cable companies must open their high-speed lines to rival Internet providers.

Justices will hear two cases challenging a lower ruling forcing cable companies to share their lines. That October 2003 decision by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has been stayed pending the outcome of appeals.

At issue is whether cable-based broadband is a “telecommunications service” that makes it subject to strict Fed-

eral Communications Commission rules requiring phone companies to provide access to independent providers.

It is a case that pits government and cable interests in spurring growth of the technology against consumer interests in lower prices.

“If customers have a choice in high-speed providers, that will mean better service, greater availability, and lower prices,” said Dave Baker, a vice president at Atlanta-based Earthlink, a telephone-based Internet provider.

The National Cable & Telecommunications Association, which has invested \$90 billion

since 1996 to develop broadband service, disagrees. “Any type of government regulation to require cable operators to form partnerships would only deter investment, innovation and competition,” said spokesman Brian Dietz.

The Federal Communications Commission voted in March 2002 to exempt cable companies from strict rules to stir more investment. The FCC reasoned that high-speed Internet over cable was just an “information service,” making it different from phone companies.

But the FCC ruling left phone companies, which offer



AP
An IBM ThinkPad computer, left, is shown next to a stack of text books that is issued to the typical fifth-grade at Johnson Elementary School, in Forney, Texas, in this , April 28, 2004, file photo.

rival digital subscriber lines, at a disadvantage. Though they must pay for upgrades, they’re subject to more regulation, including a much-debated rule requiring them to lease their infrastructure to rivals.

FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell applauded the Supreme Court’s move to hear the case.

“The 9th Circuit’s decision would have grave consequen-

es for the future and availability of high-speed Internet connections in this country,” he said in a statement. “High-speed Internet connections are not telephones.”

The appeal is being brought by the FCC and the National Cable & Telecommunications Association in two appeals. They argue that a 1984 Supreme Court ruling requires

courts to defer to a federal agency’s expertise in deciding the best policy.

Most computer users access the Internet through dial-up services, but broadband connections, through phone and cable lines and satellites, are faster. Broadband, which costs about \$40 to \$50 a month, depending on location, also features video conferencing.

Techs face scrutiny after poor 2004

NEW YORK (AP)—Technology stocks have underperformed the rest of the market so far this year, and professional investors have reduced their commitment to the industry as a growing number of analysts question the outlook for what was once Wall Street’s flashiest sector.

Among its more vulnerable areas is the computer manufacturing industry; although Dell Inc., Hewlett Packard Co. and Apple Computer released solid third-quarter earnings, a recent report from Gartner Group, an information technology research firm in Stamford, Conn., predicts massive consolidation as a current wave of corporate

PC-buying tapers off.

There’s a strong probability that three of the nation’s top 10 PC makers could be out of business by 2007, Gartner said. The report, released Nov. 29, did not speculate which companies might be affected by the consolidations, but suggested there simply would not be enough business in the future to support the current number of vendors.

“None of the companies is immune. Any one of them could have a problem,” said Leslie Fiering, a research vice president with Gartner. “With the lowered demand, you’re going to have a lot of vendors competing for smaller numbers of shipments

and smaller amounts of revenue. To meet this, we think they’ll have to take what could be as much as 2 percent out of their operating expenses ... and some companies will be able to meet that and others, it may catch them by surprise. We believe they are all vulnerable at this point.”

A report that International Business Machines Corp. is selling its PC business give credence to that point of view. The New York Times said Friday that IBM is negotiating with the Lenovo Group, China’s biggest PC maker, and at least one other unidentified prospective buyer for the unit.

Target faces backlash for bell-ringer ban

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—When Florida was reeling from one hurricane after another during the summer, the Salvation Army was a welcome sight for thousands of storm victims. But with the holidays here, the charity’s bell-ringers and red kettles have been barred from Target stores.

Target decided earlier this year it could not permit Salvation Army bell ringers at any of its stores because doing so would be unfair to other charities wanting to solicit shoppers.

Now some shoppers are

fuming that the nation’s second-largest retailer would turn away a charity whose bell-ringers have long been a symbol of the holiday season.

“Target is this year’s Ebenezer Scrooge,” said Randy Sharp of the American Family Association, a Christian group which sent an e-mail this week to 2.3 million people urging them to shop elsewhere in protest of Target’s policy. “They are the Grinch that stole Christmas for a lot of needy children.”

Carolyn Brookter, a spokes-

woman for Target, said the chain always had a “no solicitation” policy at its stores but made an exception for the Salvation Army. But Brookter said more and more groups have been asking for permission to collect money at Target, forcing the company to re-examine its relationship with the Salvation Army.

“The best way we thought to deal with this situation is to have a consistent policy,” she said. “It absolutely was a difficult decision, it was not done lightly.”

VERIZON
CMYK

McDonald’s CEO vows to build on momentum

CHICAGO (AP)—McDonald’s Corp.’s second new CEO in eight months pledged Friday to keep up the fast-food giant’s momentum with more new menu items and a continued focus on restaurant improvements, adhering to a course that has reinvigorated the burger chain’s sales and stock.

Jim Skinner, speaking to the media for the first time since succeeding Charlie Bell last week, said he will carry on with existing initiatives aimed at making McDonald’s “better, not just bigger.”

“Change in leadership does not mean change in strategy,” he said on a conference call.

The 60-year-old Skinner acknowledged mixed emotions because of the circumstances that made him the seventh CEO in the company’s history—fourth in two years—at the end of a tumultuous year of personal tragedy and stellar company results.

A 33-year veteran of the company, he was vice chairman until Bell stepped down Nov. 29 because of an ongoing bout with colon cancer. Bell, 44, had been diagnosed with cancer just two weeks after succeeding Jim Cantalupo, who died of a heart attack in April after 16 months in the post.

“These are extraordinary times for McDonald’s,” Skinner said. “We began the year, and are ending it, under the most unforeseen and unfortunate of circumstances. ... Having said that, I believe the mood of the organization as we speak today is positive, it’s confident.”

Skinner said Bell returned to his native Australia this week to be with family and friends. Details of his condition are not being released.

As to his own condition, Skinner said he works out and got a clean bill of health at his annual physical exam in October. Asked how long he expects to stay in the position, he said, “I plan to be here as long as I can make a meaningful contribution.”

Unlike the situation faced by his longtime colleague Cantalupo, Skinner doesn’t need to come up with a turnaround plan on his arrival.

McDonald’s has enjoyed 18 straight months of higher comparable sales, led by a resounding U.S. recovery built on a renewed focus on restaurant operations, extended hours and the introduction of higher-priced new products such as entree-sized salads and chicken strips.

Mike Roberts, newly promoted from head of McDonald’s U.S. division to company president and chief operating officer, said the new products combined are drawing more customers as well as increasing the average check size at U.S. restaurants by 40 percent to 70 percent.

“Guest counts are up, and

we believe there is no ceiling to our ability to attract more of our customers,” Roberts said.

New items next year will include fruit and walnut salads, as part of its push to introduce

healthier foods, along with chicken salad sandwiches in U.S. restaurants. The next big

menu addition could be Oven Selects, toasted delicatessen-style sandwiches that already

have been introduced in Canada and Australia and are being test-marketed in five states.

MICROL
+RED

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Lowering the ethics bar

To many Americans, the phrase "House ethics" probably sounds like a contradiction in terms. The general regard for Congress is so low it's hard to get worked up about sundry allegations against one lawmaker or another.

Disaffected lack of interest must be what Republican House leaders are counting on: Why else would they dare to so boldly dismantle any mechanism for enforcing standards of official conduct—and then boast that that amounted to vindication of repeated instances of crossing over the line?

Those paying attention, though, recognize the likely legacy of the contemptuous manner in which House Majority Leader Tom DeLay has swatted away ethics complaints. It teaches the men and women who make the furthest-reaching laws under which we live that they can abuse their positions with impunity—and dismiss all criticisms as politically motivated.

In other words, they can live down the reputation lawmakers like Mr. DeLay have given them.

Apparently, the only hope of restoring integrity as a valued commodity in an institution run by fierce Republican partisans who have bought into their own hyperbole rests with voices of conscience within the GOP ranks.

Now that current ethics rules are in a shambles, the landscape has at least been cleared for design of a new process that enjoys a measure of credibility and evenhandedness.

A crucial element would involve a return to the practice of allowing outside organizations to file complaints against lawmakers, rather than relying exclusively on colleagues who may be too timid or too co-opted to act. Further, the complaint review should include an investigative arm with some measure of independence—perhaps a board composed of former lawmakers.

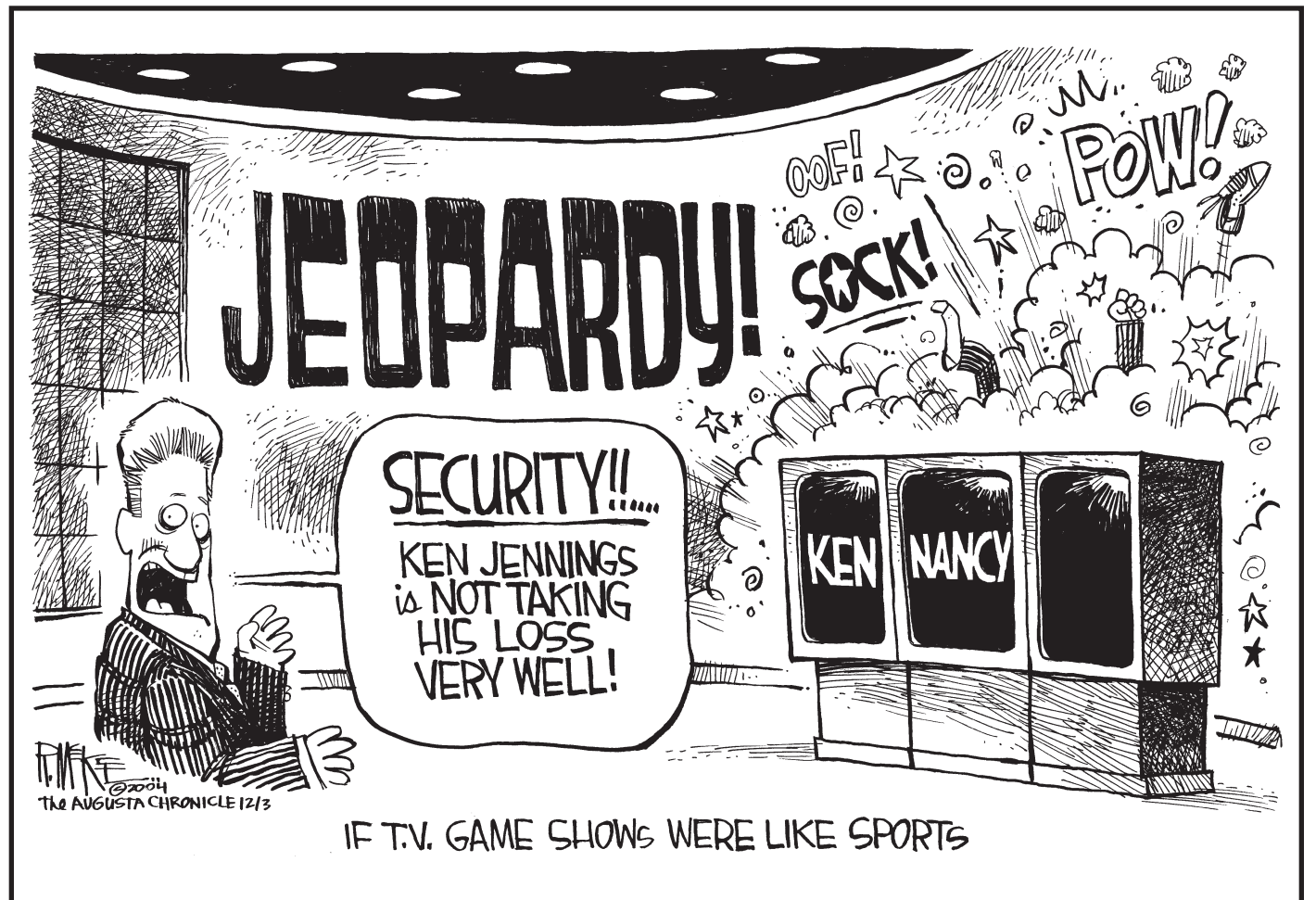
Self-policing clearly is not up to the task.

To its credit, the bipartisan House Ethics Committee has rebuked Mr. DeLay five times since 1997, including three instances this year, for creating "the appearance" of impropriety, mostly in connection with efforts to redraw Texas election districts to favor Republicans. But the committee also chastised Texas Democrat Chris Bell, who filed a complaint against Mr. DeLay that prompted the committee's action, for dealing in "innuendo" and "exaggeration." The entire House was put on notice that those who file complaints in the future that can't be firmly documented run the risk of being brought up on charges themselves.

With insiders thus chilled, and outsider complaints excluded, the House Ethics Committee appears to have effectively put itself out of business. Even so, there is talk of retribution against the Republican members.

The worst result will likely be that constituents are even further disgusted and turned off by the whole legislative process. What goes on in Washington may not be pretty, but it matters a great deal. Every citizen should pay attention.

(c) 2004, The Baltimore Sun



Boys will be men, and they'll still choose video games

By PATRICK WELSH
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Jake Stephens, a senior in my AP English class at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., is hooked. "The narrative is so exciting you lose all track of time," he said to me last week. "Three hours can go by and it seems like 15 minutes. Once I'm into it, it's hard to think of anything else; all my focus is on finishing the story line."

Was Jake talking about "All the Pretty Horses," the novel I'm currently having my students read? I wish. Personally, I find Cormac McCarthy's coming-of-age cowboy tale enthralling, with its tragic love story, graphic violence and lyrical writing. But Jake probably thinks it's pretty tame. He's seduced by a different kind of narrative—the car-stealing frenzy of one of his favorite video games, Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.

I've known for a long time that a lot of the boys in my English classes are more interested in connecting with their Xboxes in the evening than with the next three chapters of Toni Morrison's "Song of Solomon." But ever since I observed their mounting hysteria over last month's "premiere" of Halo 2, the new combat game from Microsoft, I've been trying to find out what's behind the lure of video games. As the boys I teach have endeavored to enlighten me, I haven't known whether to laugh, cry, or go find a new job. What they told me has me wondering how what I teach can possibly compete with the fast-paced razzle-dazzle of this ever-evolving entertainment form and worrying about the young guys who spend so much time divorced from reality and the life of the mind as they zap away the hours before their video screens.

I had to chuckle at the image of otherwise reasonable boys keeping a vigil outside the local Best Buy store until the doors opened at midnight on Nov. 9, when they could charge in to be the first to snap up Halo 2, which added \$125 million to Bill Gates' company fortune on its debut day alone. But I didn't think it was so funny when some guys skipped school that day to stay home and try to beat the game. Senior Steve Penn (who wasn't one of the skippers) told me that the following weekend, he played for six hours straight (minus bathroom breaks) at a friend's house. When he got home at 1 a.m. on Sunday, he went at it for two more hours, fell asleep, got up at 7 and fired up the game again. "My mother had to remind me to change my clothes and take a shower," he said.

Steve, like Jake, is a good student; he even finished "All the Pretty Horses" (which he said he appreciated because it "wasn't sappy") a week before it was due. I'm not especially worried about the boys who manage to balance their passion for video games with their responsibilities to school and to themselves. But I have to wonder what effect this widespread, intense obsession with the games is bound to have on the boys who can't, or don't, manage that balance,

the boys whose time and concentration the games suck away. And suck them away they do.

I'm not the only one to see it happening. T.C. girls have told me that at parties they are often totally ignored as the guys gather around TV screens, entranced by one video game or another. "Girls sit around watching the guys play until they get fed up and drive off looking for something else to do," says junior Sarah Kell, for whom the games range from "stupid and boring" to "disgusting." (Most girls tell me they find the games silly.) "We try to tell them they're wasting their time, but they just keep going. Some guys stay up playing until 3 in the morning on school nights, and then they try to do their homework."

I figured I would finally discover what all the excitement was about when I went to a Halo 2 party at a friend's Internet company recently. But as I wandered among the four offices where teams of three to four guys—bright, highly educated guys in their mid-20s and early 30s—were competing, I kept asking myself: "Is this all there is to it?" I'm not sure what I was expecting, but certainly it was something more than a game where you shoot at moving objects until you get 50 "kills."

I know that Halo 2 aficionados will say that's a gross oversimplification. And as one who gave up video games after several failed attempts at Pac-Man in the early '70s, I may be the last person who should be commenting on them. Like many others, though, I find the rampant violence, misogyny and sexual and racial stereotyping of some games beyond offensive, and wonder about the negative messages they're sending to young people.

But my more immediate concern is how to get books back on the playing field. I became an English teacher because I love literature and wanted to share it with students. Literature, however, demands that we enter into an imaginative world slowly, through the written word. It forces us to re-create this world in our minds, through the power of our imaginations. When my students finish "All the Pretty Horses," I'll show them some scenes from the 2000 movie. I know that the students who really got into the reading will say, as kids in previous years have said, that the world the movie creates—even enhanced by the star power of Matt Damon and Penelope Cruz—can in no way compare to the richness of the world the book allows them to evoke for themselves.

But I also know that many of the boys won't care one way or the other. They won't have engaged with the novel on the level that really makes an imagined story come alive. Entering the fictional world of a novel takes a different set of skills from getting to the "next level" in a video game—as I found out during my pathetic attempt to steal a car when I played Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas last week.

As much as I love "All The Pretty Horses," I admit it can't compete. See BOYS on Page 12

FROM

From Page 11

has flown again and again to meet with Putin and nobody doubts that the aim is to consult the Russian president about what to do next—telephone conversations are no longer considered safe.

People are sure that separatist rumblings in eastern Ukraine were scripted with Russian help. But they failed even so. After the separatists made their declarations, many people who had always been pro-Russian started to say that they do not want to live in Russia after all. We are left wondering why Kuchma does not consult with us, instead of going to Putin—he

is still being given a chance to avoid being cursed by his own people.

I know that all democracies have experienced periods in their history similar to the one we are experiencing. The Czechs, the Lithuanians, the East Germans and other former communist subjects went through them more than a decade ago, and now their countries are all members of the European Union. Ukraine’s future is in Europe, and the EU has already given a signal that once free democratic elections are held and the results not falsified, Ukraine will get its chance to become an EU member.

One of the provocative arguments made against Yushchenko throughout

the presidential campaign was that he is pro-American, that the United States has been financing his campaign, thus advancing its own agenda here. In response, Yushchenko repeated the words of the famous Ukrainian poet Vasyl Symonenko, who was a victim of the Soviet regime: “Let America and Russia keep silence when I talk to you, Ukraine.”

True, the United States has extended financial aid to Ukraine over the last 13 years of our independence, but I don’t see this as having been done for nefariously self-serving reasons. Even when the U.S. government cut financial support to Ukrainian governmental projects, it continued to support the non-

governmental sector and the academic exchanges of professors and students, thus financing the development of freedom in Ukraine. I have profited myself, traveling to the United States and learning there about the rule of law. Unlike Russia, which has always acted surreptitiously, the United States never made a secret of its actions. I think first of all about how in America, the government basically gets permission for this support from its own citizens—the taxpayers.

On Friday, in my office, we hugged, congratulated each other and wiped away each other’s tears when we heard that the Supreme Court had annulled the runoff election results. Similar ex-

pressions of jubilation burst out among the tens of thousands of demonstrators in Independence Square, and fireworks crackled in the night sky. The new vote will take place on Dec. 26. We know that this is not the end, that difficult weeks lie ahead. But for the first time, we believe that we the people can do something without having to follow a script, no matter who wrote it. This is the will of the people, who have chosen freedom.

The author, a professor of international law at Kiev-Mohyla Academy, was a Fulbright scholar in 1996 at the Urban Morgan Human Rights Institute of the University of Cincinnati College of Law.

BOYS

From Page 10

pel the focus or generate the kind of excitement that guys find in Halo 2, Madden ‘05, Grand Theft Auto or any of the other new generation of games. Whatever vicarious experience a novel or even a movie can offer, “gamers” say it can’t approach a video game’s intensity of experience.

I have to confess that when I was in high school, reading novels wasn’t too high on my list of priorities, either. So maybe, you say, I shouldn’t worry about my students. They’ll come around to literature later. But the video craze apparently isn’t something that wears off with adolescence. In fact, it

seems to intensify in college.

Old Dominion University freshman Nick Pratt said that as soon as Halo 2 came out, some guys skipped classes for three straight days to play the game in the dorms. Duke freshman Sarah Ball told me she can walk down the hall of a male-only floor in her dorm and hear video games going in every room. “Lately they’ve been having Halo 2 tournaments,” she reports. “There will be wall-to-wall bodies in a room, the lights are off for that video game ambience. I stuck my head in once to ask a friend a question and got death stares.”

Video games have taken over the lives of some guys in her dorm, says University of Virginia freshman Remy

Kauffmann. “I’ve never seen anything like it. It’s hard to have a conversation with these guys. If they’re not playing, they want to start up a game.”

“One of the reasons so many kids bomb out of college in their first year,” says Silver Spring, Md., educational psychologist Bill Stixrud, “is that without parents to set some boundaries, they can’t control the video games and other electronic entertainment available to them.” How often do you think that happens with a good novel?

I know we all need entertainment and downtime, and I’ve certainly thrown away a few hours in my life myself. I would love to have back all the time I’ve wasted watching professional football games. And I take a little solace from

the predictions of cyberspace gurus at places like MIT, who say that video games are creating a new art form—the interactive narrative—as revolutionary as the printing press or the invention of movies. Interactive narratives will put us right in the story and allow us, at the push of a button, to choose from many plot lines, they promise.

But while we’re waiting for the next Orson Welles or Francis Ford Coppola to come out of Silicon Valley or MIT, I see a whole generation of boys being manipulated by mercenary video game designers who aren’t terribly interested in creating high art. I worry that video games are contributing to the growing gap I see in the academic achievement of boys and girls and to the dispropor-

tionate number of boys being labeled LD and being put on Ritalin.

There are some great boys in my first-period class, and I hope they’ve been able to take the time and find the solitude to give themselves a chance to get into “All the Pretty Horses.” If they don’t like it after a solid effort, so be it. I won’t argue over questions of taste.

But I will be royally bothered if they’ve been cheated out of a chance to experience the beauty and power of the book because a marathon of video game-playing dissipated their time and blunted their sensibilities.

The author has taught English at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., for more than 30 years.

Nation

GOP, Democrats trade seats in La. runoff

By ADAM NOSSITER
 ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Republicans picked up a congressional seat in southern Louisiana on Saturday, but gave another right back to Democrats in a second, much closer runoff election that was also in Cajun country.
 A longtime Democratic bastion in Louisiana’s 7th District went to Republican Charles Boustany, a retired heart surgeon. With 94 percent of the precincts reporting, Boustany had 72,223 votes or 55 percent, and Democratic state Sen. Willie Landry Mount had 58,968 or 45 percent.
 Farther south, Billy Tauzin III narrowly lost a race to succeed his retiring father, a Republican House of Representatives powerhouse. In the 3rd District, with 100 percent of precincts reporting, Democrat Charles Melancon had 57,609 votes, and Tauzin trailed him by barely 500 votes, with 57,092.
 The last bits of unfinished business from the 2004 congressional election season, both races were marked by heavy negative campaigning and light voter interest. The runoffs were necessary because none of the candidates won a 50 percent majority.
 Vice President Dick

Cheney and Democratic Gov. Kathleen Blanco tried to drum up enthusiasm for their candidates, but parish officials said turnout was extremely low with voters apparently turned off by a relentless barrage of attack ads.
 In the 3rd District along Louisiana’s swampy southern coast, Melancon, a former state representative, derided his 31-year-old opponent as a callow fraternity boy who was trying to inherit the seat from his 12-term incumbent father, Rep. Billy Tauzin Sr.
 Tauzin returned fire, calling Melancon a liberal who has voted in favor of sex-education for small children.
 Republicans poured money into the other race, where Boustany portrayed Mount, a state senator, as a tax-happy liberal. Mount, in turn, accused Boustany of favoring tax cuts for the rich and not caring enough about reforming health care.
 Boustany will fill the seat being vacated by Democratic Rep. Chris John, who ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate this year.
 Though Republicans have held the 3rd District for nearly a quarter-century, thanks to the popularity of the retiring Tauzin Sr., Republicans had said their best chance was in the traditionally Democratic 7th District.

Bush downplays terror worries

By JENNIFER LOVEN
 AP WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT



President Bush gestures as he answers questions during his meeting with Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in the Oval Office of the White House, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004, in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush played down on Saturday a stark warning from his resigning health chief that the nation’s food supply is largely unprotected from terror attack.
 Bush said that the government is doing what it can to safeguard the public from threats, but much work remains.
 “We’re a large country, with all kinds of avenues where somebody could inflict harm,” said Bush, asked about the issue after an Oval Office meeting with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. “We’ve made a lot of progress in protecting our country, and there’s more work to be done, and this administration is committed to doing it.”
 Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said in a speech Friday announcing his coming departure from the Bush Cabinet that he worries “every single night” about a possible terror attack on the food supply.
 Despite dramatic increases in inspections of food imports, only “a very minute amount” of food is tested at ports and airports, Thompson said.
 “For the life of me, I cannot

understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply because it is so easy to do,” Thompson said. “We are importing a lot of food from the Middle East, and it would be easy to tamper with that.”
 Asked to respond to Thompson’s comments, Bush neither criticized them nor implied that the food supply is safer than Thompson asserted.
 Bush asked for Congress’ help to boost domestic security, urging lawmakers to confirm quickly his choice to take over leadership of the Homeland Security Department. On Friday, Bush nominated former New York Police Chief Bernie Kerik to succeed Tom Ridge, who announced his resignation Tuesday from the department created to oversee the nation’s protection from attack.
 Of Kerik, Bush said, “I hope the Senate confirms him quickly so he can get to work.”
 Bush’s security efforts on the home front even got a plug from the president’s foreign guest.
 “You are trying your best to address the issue of terrorism all over the world, and obviously the most important part is to protect your own, the United States, from terrorism,” Musharraf said.

Military official weighs in on new photos

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—A former military spokesman in Iraq said Saturday new pictures showing apparent abuse of Iraqi

prisoners were the acts of an isolated few but will be used by some to try to tarnish the entire U.S. military.

Gen. Mark Kimmitt, now based in Qatar, spoke on the pan-Arab television network a day after the U.S. military

launched a criminal investigation into photographs that appear to show Navy SEALs in Iraq sitting on hooded and handcuffed detainees.
 Other photos show what appear to be bloodied prisoners, one with a gun to his head.
 The photos, found by an Associated Press reporter, were among hundreds in an album posted on a commercial photo-sharing Web site by a woman who said her husband brought them from Iraq after his tour of duty.
 Some of the photos have date stamps suggesting they were taken in May 2003, which could make them the earliest evidence of possible abuse of prisoners in Iraq. The far more brutal practices photographed in Abu Ghraib prison occurred months later.
 The photos were turned over to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which instructed the SEAL command to determine whether they show any serious crimes, said Navy Cmdr. Jeff Bender, a spokesman for the Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, Calif. That investigation will determine the identities of the troops and what they were doing in the photos.
 Kimmitt, the spokesman in Iraq at the time of the Abu Ghraib scandal, said he believes the photos show the acts of an isolated few.

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Judge: Commander to testify in abuse trial

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP)—A military judge on Saturday ordered the former commander of U.S. prisons in Iraq to testify at the trial of a soldier who says he was ordered to abuse detainees at Abu Ghraib.

The judge, Col. James Pohl, said Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski's testimony at the trial of Sgt. Javal Davis would be limited to conditions at Abu Ghraib and the interaction there between guards and military interrogators.

Davis has acknowledged stepping on the fingers and toes of detainees, but told investigators that military intelligence personnel appeared to approve. "We were told they had different rules," he said, according to an Army report.

Pohl's decision during a pre-trial hearing came as the Navy said it was investigating new photographs obtained by The Associated Press that appear to show Navy SEALs in Iraq sitting on hooded and handcuffed detainees. Other photos show what appear to be bloodied prisoners, one with a gun to his head.

Karpinski has denied knowing about any mistreatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib until photographs were made public at the end of April showing hooded and naked prisoners being tormented by their U.S. captors. She was relieved of her command after abuses at the prison came to light.

In an interview with the AP, Karpinski said a "conspiracy"

among top U.S. commanders left her to blame for the abuses. A report issued by an independent panel of nongovernment experts blamed Karpinski for leadership failures that "helped set the conditions at the prison which led to the abuses."

Her attorney, Neal A. Puckett, said Saturday afternoon that he had not been notified of Pohl's order. But he said Karpinski, who is now in the Army Reserves, gave a deposition in an earlier case.

"She's always been willing to cooperate in any investigation. There's be no reason for her not to testify," he said.

Davis is among seven members of the Maryland-based 372nd Military Police Com-

pany charged with humiliating and assaulting prisoners at the Baghdad prison.

Pfc. Lynndie England, whose court-martial is scheduled for Jan. 18, also sought to call Karpinski as a witness, along with Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The judge in her case rejected those requests, but allowed England's attorneys to submit a deposition from Karpinski as evidence.

Davis, of Roselle, N.J., faces charges including conspiracy to maltreat detainees, assault, dereliction of duty and lying in official statements. He has denied hurting prisoners but said he was ordered to "soften them up."

If convicted on all counts,

he faces eight years in a military prison.

Pretrial hearings at Fort Hood on Saturday for Davis and Spc. Sabrina Harman were originally scheduled to begin next year in Baghdad. No reason was given for the decision to move the trials to the United States.

Paul Bergrin, a Newark, N.J., lawyer representing Davis, said Saturday that his client's behavior was not unreasonable given the conditions he worked and lived under at Abu Ghraib: long hours, oppressive heat, frequent mortar attacks by insurgents and pressure from higher-ups to obtain useful information from detainees.

Asked if Davis is bearing blame for interrogation deci-

sions made at top levels in his command, Bergrin said, "That's the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Bergrin sought a dozen detainees to tell military jurors that Davis treated them well and acted professionally. Pohl cut that number down to four.

Maj. Michael Holley and Capt. Christopher Graveline, the military prosecutors, are restricted under law from commenting on pending cases.

Harman was photographed standing behind naked, hooded Iraqis stacked in a human pyramid. She also was shown next to a dead body packed in ice giving thumbs-up signs with Spc. Charles Graner Jr., described as the ringleader.

Dad cites boy's anti-depressants in deaths

By **JEFFREY COLLINS**
AP WRITER

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Authorities say three years ago, Christopher Pittman, then 12, shot his grandparents as they slept because they had scolded him for fighting. But Christopher's father, Joe Pittman, thinks his son killed because his sense of right and wrong was clouded by the anti-depressant Zoloft.

Joe Pittman spoke out against the drug in a Food and Drug Administration hearing early this year. The boy, who had threatened suicide, was put on the drug three weeks before the slayings, and his dose was doubled just two days earlier.

Joe Pittman's hands shook as he read his son's confession to a roomful of strangers during the hearing.

"I took everything out on my grandparents, who I loved so very much," wrote then-12-year-old Christopher Pittman. "When I was lying in my bed that night, I couldn't sleep because my voice in my head kept echoing through my mind, telling me to kill them."

But prosecutors and police say Christopher's actions during and after the November 2001 slayings show he clearly knew what he was doing was wrong.

The boy waited until his grandparents were sleeping and took a pump-action shotgun from a gun cabinet. He crept into the couple's dark bedroom, first shooting 66-year-old Joe Frank Pittman in his open mouth, then firing into the back of 62-year-old Joy Pittman's head.

Christopher then set the house on fire and drove off in the family car. When he got stuck on a dirt road 20 miles away, he told hunters he was kidnapped by a man who killed his grandparents, set the fire, drove him into the woods and ran away.

Christopher was living with

his father's parents in hopes of turning his life around. He told defense experts he felt abandoned by his mother and his relationship with his father was rocky. No one answered phone calls to Joe Pittman's home.

A month before the slayings, Christopher was hospitalized in Florida, where his father lives, after he threatened to kill himself. The boy was prescribed the anti-depressant Paxil, but another doctor soon put him on Zoloft instead.

Pittman decided to send the boy to live with his grandparents in Chester County, a rural area between Columbia and Charlotte, N.C.

Christopher, who turns 16 in April, is being prosecuted as an adult and faces 30 years to life in prison if convicted at his trial, set to start next month. His lawyers argue that his case should be moved to Family Court, where if convicted, he could only be kept in custody until he turns 21.

Karen Menzies, one of Christopher's lawyers and an attorney specializing in lawsuits against anti-depressant makers, said medical research is available to support the Zoloft defense.

In the three years the teen has spent in jail awaiting trial, the FDA has become increasingly wary of doctors prescribing Zoloft and other antidepressants for children.

In October, the agency ordered the drugs to carry "black box" warnings—the government's strongest warning short of a ban—about increasing the risk of suicidal behavior in children.

"The science has been out there for a while. The prescription drug companies have been able to hide it," Menzies said.

On the other side is Pfizer Inc., the maker of Zoloft, which has aided the prosecution, according to Solicitor John Justice, who has since taken himself off the case for health reasons.

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Asia

Bush defends Pakistan's hunt for bin Laden

By JENNIFER LOVEN
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush on Saturday defended Pakistan's cooperation in the hunt for Osama bin Laden despite the inability of U.S. and Pakistani troops to find the al-Qaida leader who, Bush once declared, was wanted dead or alive.

The trail has gone cold in the more than three years since U.S. forces toppled the Taliban, bin Laden's patrons in Afghanistan, after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Bin Laden, who masterminded the strikes, is believed to be hiding in the wild mountainous region along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Oval Office meeting between Bush and President Pervez Musharraf came just days after Pakistan's army said it was pulling out of one important area along the border. Still, Bush had nothing but praise for Pakistan and Musharraf as critical to the search and the overall fight against terrorism.

"His army has been incredibly active and very brave in southern Waziristan flushing out an enemy that had thought they had found safe haven," Bush said.

U.S. officials have praised Islamabad for its operations around Wana, the main town of the lawless and fiercely autonomous Waziristan region. Heavy resistance this year led to speculation that a high-profile fugitive—possible bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahri—was cornered.

"His army has suffered casualties and for that we want to thank their loved ones for the sacrifice that their family has made," Bush said.

Musharraf came to the White House with a committed belief that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is essential to combating terrorism. At Bush's side, Musharraf said the dispute was "the most important issue ... in the interest of peace in the whole world."

Musharraf succeeded in securing a strong commitment



President Bush, right, and Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, left, during their meeting in the Oval Office of the White House, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004, in Washington.

from Bush that the United States would take a more active role in the Mideast.

"I told him this would be a

priority of my administration," Bush said.

Afterward, Musharraf told reporters that Bush had agreed

that settling the Middle East conflict "is the core issue, the core at fighting terrorism." A senior Bush administration of-

ficial, however, said Bush did not go that far.

Grateful for Pakistan's hard line against Islamic extremists and for the capture of al-Qaida suspects, the United States nonetheless has a delicate relationship with Pakistan and is aware of the need to avoid roiling Pakistan's internal politics. Musharraf's support of the United States threatens to endanger him at home.

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Pakistani commanders now say they do not believe any of al-Qaida's leaders are in the region and said they saw no sign of bin Laden.

Last month, Pakistan's army announced it was withdrawing hundreds of troops from South Waziristan.

Typhoon-like gusts hit Japan; 13 injured

TOKYO (AP)—Gale-force winds pounded eastern Japan early Sunday, knocking out power to homes, stirring coastal waves that caused a tanker ship to run aground and injuring at least 13 people.

Tokyo and the surrounding cities were hit with gusts reaching 107 mph in Chiba prefecture (state), just east of the capital, according to the Meteorological Agency. Winds dislodged roof tiles, collapsed construction scaffolding and blew debris that broke windows and punched holes into buildings.

"The winds were as strong or stronger than a typhoon," agency official Kunihiko Yamanishi said.

An area of low pressure over the main island of Honshu caused the winds and was expected to do the same on the northernmost main island of Hokkaido, he said.

Temperatures in Tokyo were forecast to rise above 77 degrees Sunday—the highest on record for December, the agency said.

Police said 13 people suffered mostly minor injuries. One woman in her 70s dislocated her shoulder after being swept off her feet by a gust in Tateyama city, a Chiba prefectural police official said on condition of anonymity.

At Tokyo's Haneda Airport, at least 50 flights were canceled early Sunday and dozens of other flights were delayed. High-speed "bullet" train services in the Tokyo metropolitan area were temporarily suspended,



The 460-ton chemical tanker Kissho is exposed to strong winds in Tateyama, east of Tokyo, Chiba Prefecture, Sunday morning after it rammed aground earlier in the day, Dec. 5, 2004.

and local train lines were halted by fallen trees and landslides, officials said.

Windblown debris and toppled trees severed power lines in Chiba, temporarily causing blackouts for as many as 32,300 households, Tokyo Electric Power Co. spokesman Takashi Nakayama said. By midmorning, about a fourth of the homes had their power restored, he said.

Off the coast of Chiba, huge waves battered a 460-ton chemical tanker, the Kissho Maru, forcing it to run aground, NHK reported. None of its five crew members was injured and no fuel or chemicals had leaked, the broadcaster said. It also cited coast guard officials as saying that maritime authorities were working to haul the tanker to a port.

US, allies in flurry of nuclear talks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The key players in international efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions are picking up the pace in what has become a protracted ritual of talking about talks and discussing how to entice the North's recalcitrant government back into negotiations.

But the communist North dug in Saturday, saying its U.N. diplomats met U.S. officials in New York on Tuesday and again on Friday but concluded that Pyongyang should hold off on negotiations until President Bush's administration changes Washington's "hostile" policy toward Pyongyang.

"Our analysis of the results of the contact in New York prompts us to judge that the U.S. side showed no willingness to change its policy to-

ward us and intends to use the six-party talks as a leverage for forcing us to dismantle all our nuclear programs, including the nuclear development for a peaceful purpose first," a North Korean spokesman said, according to KCNA.

Three rounds of six-nation talks aimed at persuading the North to halt weapons development have taken place since last year, all without a breakthrough. North Korea boycotted a fourth round scheduled for September, and analysts believed it was holding out for a change in the White House.

North Korea wants to maintain nuclear facilities for power generation and medical and agricultural research but says it will abandon its nuclear weapons development if the United States provides economic compensation and

security guarantees, including a peace treaty to replace an armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War. Washington has demanded an immediate dismantling of all the North's nuclear activities.

"The U.S. should come out to replace the unstable state of cease-fire with a durable peace mechanism ... to co-exist with the (North) if the bilateral nuclear issue and other security issues are to be fairly solved," KCNA said in another dispatch.

The American-led U.N. Command, which defended South Korea during the war, signed a truce, not a peace treaty, with North Korea at the end of the war, leaving the Korean Peninsula technically still at war.

Since Bush's November re-election, diplomacy has resumed.

Army deserter Jenkins to settle in Japan

SADO, Japan (AP)—U.S. Army deserter Charles Jenkins' new home sits nestled on a quiet lane of single-story wooden houses next to a farm. A small patch of tomatoes and red peppers lines the edge of the property.

After 39 years of surveillance in totalitarian North Korea and a month in a U.S. military prison, the only people watching Jenkins on this wind-swept isle of mountainous forests and rice paddies will be his Japanese wife and their two daughters.

Plus a neighbor or two.

"He's very welcome!" grinned Seiji Chimoto, a 77-year-old cabinet salesman who lives across the street from Jenkins' father-in-law. "We're glad to have him."

Jenkins' arrival on Sado, expected next week, will end a Cold War saga that has generated an outpouring of sympathy in his wife's homeland and offered a rare glimpse of life in North Korea.

Freed a week ago after serving 25 days for deserting the Army and defecting to North Korea in 1965, the 64-year-old

Jenkins said he is ready to re-settle his family in Japan. That will fulfill a long-held wish of his wife, Hitomi Soga.

In 1978, when Soga was 19, she was abducted by communist agents, bundled into a black bag and loaded onto a boat bound for North Korea. The North allowed her to come home two years ago, but Jenkins and their daughters Mika, now 21, and Brinda, now 19, stayed in North Korea.

Jenkins and his daughters came to Japan in July and he surrendered to U.S. military authorities.

World

String of Iraq suicide attacks kill 16

By SAMEER N. YACOB
AP WRITER

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Suicide car bombs struck Iraqi police and Kurdish militiamen in Baghdad and northern Iraq on Saturday, killing at least 16 people, wounding dozens, and again demonstrating the lethal reach of Iraq's insurgency just weeks ahead of crucial elections.

The U.S. commander in Iraq, Gen. John Abizaid, acknowledged that the country's homegrown forces aren't yet up to the task of ensuring secure elections, requiring the planned increase in U.S. troops. More than 42 Iraqis have been killed in the last two days alone.

But U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi criticized the military's hardline approach to the insurgency and said credible elections cannot be held Jan. 30 under the current conditions.

Meanwhile, the insurgents pursued their deadly campaign against American troops. Two

U.S. soldiers were killed by roadside bombs in Baghdad and north of the capital Saturday, and the military said two other Americans died the day before in suicide car bombings of their post near the Jordanian border.

With the country still so unstable and elections eight weeks away, the U.S. military plans to increase its troop strength from 138,000 to about 150,000 by mid-January—slightly more than during the 2003 invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein's regime—in an attempt to keep order during the vote. The primary concern is Iraq's Sunnis, who generally oppose the vote and are believed to be fueling the insurgency.

In candid remarks, Abizaid admitted the troop increase wasn't what Washington had envisioned.

"It had been our hope that we would be able to have a combination of increases that mainly were Iraqi troops' increases," Abizaid, the head of U.S. Central Command, said.

"And while the Iraqi troops are larger in number than they used to be, those forces have to be seasoned more, trained more. So, it's necessary to bring more American forces."

Speaking to reporters at a regional security conference in Bahrain, Abizaid declined to speculate on when the Iraqi forces would be ready or say how many they now number. But he said they were "constantly improving."

Brahimi, however, said the United States and the Iraqi government should reconsider their reliance on force to eliminate insurgents.

In an interview published Saturday in a Dutch newspaper, the U.N. envoy insisted the country cannot go ahead with the elections "if conditions remain the same."

"It's a mess in Iraq. The international community, hopefully with the Americans, must help the Iraqis to clean up the mess," he said.



British troops secure the area as their helicopter takes off in Basra Saturday Dec. 4, 2004 after they discovered five multiple rocket launchers opposite British military base. AP

Brahimi, an Algerian, was sent to Iraq to help form the interim government that took power on June 28.

Officials had hoped the recent U.S.-led assault on the insurgent hotbed of Fallujah would put the rebels on the defensive. But the latest attacks showed they are still highly capable of hitting back where they choose.

Putin accuses US of double standard

NEW DELHI (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin sharply criticized the United States on Friday, accusing it of a double-standard in fighting terrorism and questioning whether any election in Iraq can be democratic when fighting is raging in the country.

Putin, who has been angered by U.S. and European denunciations of the Ukraine election as rigged unacceptable, began a three-day visit to India with continued criticism of Washington, saying it seeks a "dictatorship of international affairs."

"Even if dictatorship is wrapped up in a beautiful package of pseudo-democratic phraseology, it will not be in a position to solve systemic problems," Russia's Itar-Tass news agency quoted him as saying in a speech Friday night in New Delhi.

Putin, who has been critical of the United States for going to war without international approval, warned that the fighting in Iraq was threatening the



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, right, wave to the media before their official talks in New Delhi, India, Friday, Dec. 3, 2004. AP

possibility of a democratic vote slated for Jan. 30.

"All this will definitely call in question the possibility of holding honest and democratic elections in Iraq early next year," he said.

Putin and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh signed a

joint declaration that called for ending "political expediency" in the global fight against terrorism. The declaration made no reference to any country.

But in an interview in a Hindu newspaper, Putin said the United States and European nations practiced double

standards by allowing into their countries some Chechen rebels whom Moscow considers to be terrorists.

Britain has granted refugee status to Akhmed Zakayev, an envoy for rebel leader and former Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov. Iyas Akhmadov, a former Chechen foreign minister, has been granted U.S. asylum.

"We cannot have double standards while fighting terrorism and it cannot be used as an instrument of a geopolitical game," Putin said at a public lecture.

Russia and India signed agreements on exploring peaceful uses of outer space, easing visa rules and India's inclusion in a Russian-promoted global navigational satellite system.

The two countries also signed eight other agreements that focused on cooperation in energy and banking, academic research, and cultural and economic exchanges between India's financial hub, Bombay, and Putin's home town, St. Petersburg.

DESIGN FLORIST

French police misplace explosives on jet

PARIS (AP)—Police at Paris' top airport lost track of a passenger's bag in which plastic explosives were placed to train bomb-sniffing dogs, police said Saturday. Warned that the bag may have gotten on any of nearly 90 flights from Charles de Gaulle, authorities searched planes upon arrival in Los Angeles and New York.

French police said the explosives were harmless and there was no chance of their going off, since no detonators

were connected to them.

More than 300 passengers were evacuated and their luggage searched when their Air France flight from Charles de Gaulle arrived in Los Angeles late Friday the U.S. Transportation Security Administration said.

Two Air France and one American Airlines flight to Paris were also searched in New York City, TSA spokesman Norm Brewer said. No explosives were found on any of the flights.

French police at Charles de

Gaulle deliberately placed up to five ounces of plastic explosives into a passenger's luggage Friday evening, police spokesman Pierre Bouquin said.

But a "momentary lack of surveillance" led to the bag being lost on a conveyor belt carrying luggage from check-in to planes, he said.

Authorities immediately alerted the relevant airlines that one of between 80 and 90 planes that left the French capital from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday could be carrying

the explosives, Bouquin said.

Four of the flights were en route to the United States, while others were headed to places like Japan and Brazil, Bouquin said. Some were domestic French flights. The flight searched in Los Angeles was delayed two to three hours before continuing on its next leg to Tahiti in the South Pacific.

"These dogs must be trained in the most realistic situation possible ... to be the most effective," Bouquin said.

Ukraine opposition suffers setback

By ANNA MELNICHUK
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Supporters of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko lost a round to their foes in parliament Saturday, when pro-government lawmakers helped block legal changes intended to prevent fraud in the Dec. 26 repeat of the country's presidential runoff vote.

Buoyed by a momentous Supreme Court ruling a day earlier that ordered the new vote, Yushchenko's supporters vowed to force parliament to adopt the legislation by continuing their marathon protest in Kiev's central square.

Outgoing President Leonid Kuchma tried to bring European pressure on the opposition, which he accused of reneging on its promises. Kuchma called for a new round of European-mediated

talks with the opposition on Monday.

The jockeying for position came as the opposition celebrated its court victory, confident Yushchenko can beat Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich if a fair runoff is held. Yanukovich, Kuchma's ally, confirmed he would compete in the new vote, and the Central Election Commission formally set a Dec. 26 date for the balloting, as ordered by the court.

Yushchenko had been hoping for quick approval of a raft of bills that would amend election laws and reshuffle the election commission, which the opposition accused of covering up fraud in the initial runoff, held Nov. 21. The opposition says the changes are needed to ensure the new vote is fair.

But the package was blocked when a compromise agreement fell apart, and

the parliament adjourned for 10 days without passing the legislation.

Communists, socialists and pro-government factions in parliament had promised to back the legislation in exchange for the opposition's support of a constitutional reform bill that would transfer some of the president's powers to parliament.

Late Saturday, Yushchenko told thousands of supporters gathered in Kiev's main Independence Square that his government foes were trying to trim presidential powers, fearing his victory. He urged the global community to help monitor the new vote.

"They realized that they aren't going to win, so they decided to make constitutional changes to revise presidential powers," Yushchenko said.

"Despite Christmas, the interna-

tional community must ensure strong observers' presence," he said at the rally. "That will be the day that will determine Ukraine's fate for decades and centuries ahead."

The chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Solomon Passy, pledged that the group would again deploy a full-fledged mission for the rerun.

The opposition, meanwhile, warned that thousands of protesters could force the parliament to change course.

Yushchenko's supporters objected to the proposed changes, insisting instead that the parliament vote on electoral amendments now and consider the constitutional reforms after the presidential rerun.

"Combining electoral changes and constitutional reform is legally illiter-

ate," said lawmaker Yulia Tymoshenko, a fiery Yushchenko ally. "We must first create legal conditions for holding elections. No one in the world passes constitutional changes in a rush."

Socialist leader Oleksandr Moroz accused Yushchenko of reneging on his promise. "No one is going to win from reneging on the agreement," Moroz said.

Kuchma, who has strongly pushed for the constitutional reform, also accused the opposition of breaking its promises.

"The opposition isn't fulfilling practically any of the agreements reached at a round table that involved European politicians," Kuchma said in a phone conversation with Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, whose country holds the rotating presidency of the European Union. "That exacerbates the situation in the country."

Rwandan invasion evidence proves elusive

MUTONGO, Congo (AP)—Swooping over the lush, volcanic hills of east Congo, a helicopter patrol by U.N. observers on Saturday revealed emptied villages—one spotted a day earlier was half-burned—but little sign of who was responsible.

Despite numerous accounts from villagers of an influx of Rwandan troops, U.N. observers on this particular day found scant evidence of a threatened invasion by Congo's neighbor that would put central Africa back on the brink of war.

In a country the size of Western Europe, Saturday's tour underscored the difficulty—even for a U.N. force of more than 11,000 troops—of finding any of the many fighters still at play in postwar east Congo, particularly if they do not want to be found.

On Saturday, U.N. observers set down their white helicopter in the schoolyard of Mutongo, a village 80 miles from Rwanda's border. Mutongo now houses some of the thousands of villagers displaced in recent days by unidentified attackers.

A dozen South African U.N. forces, heads covered in the U.N.'s baby-blue caps, jumped out to crouch in the long grass, surveying the surrounding hills.

"Long live Mutongo!" Congolese regional military leader Col. Etienne Bindu, who accompanied the observers, shouted to townspeople in greeting.

"Long live Mutongo!" dozens of excited children, many barefooted and dressed in rags, shouted back.

At issue is whether Rwanda has sent troops into Congo, as Rwandan President Paul Kagame threatened



UN troops make notes of the situation in the town of Mutongo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004.

to do last week, in pursuit of 8,000-10,000 Rwandan Hutu rebels sheltering across the border.

Rwanda invaded Congo twice before—in 1996 and 1998—in pursuit of the Hutu rebels, including the culprits responsible for Rwanda's Hutu-led 1994 massacre of more than a half-million minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Rwanda's second Congo invasion, in 1998, touched off a five-year, six-nation war that killed millions of Congolese, mostly here in the east, and split Africa's third-largest nation.

Rwanda increasingly denies following through on its latest threat, and U.N. observers went on patrol to check that claim.

At Mutongo, the U.N. observers got mostly secondhand accounts from local leaders and what they believe are exaggerated or fake claims of massive Rwandan attacks.

"It's impossible," Maj. Brighesh Pandey, an Indian U.N. observer, muttered to his translator after one such account. "Four thousand troops against them, and only seven of them died?"

Other patrols, on other days, have found what the U.N. calls more convincing indications of a possible Rwandan incursion. Last week, air and ground surveys photographed unidentified, recently occupied encampments and unidentified, well-equipped troops in Congo.

Germany arrests 4th suspect in Allawi plot

BERLIN (AP)—A German judge on Saturday allowed the continued detention of three men suspected of planning an attack on Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi during his visit to Berlin this week, while a fourth suspect was arrested in the capital, the prosecutors' spokesman said.

The judge in Karlsruhe issued a formal arrest warrant based on suspicion of belonging to an international terrorist group, allowing authorities to continue holding the men, who were picked up on Friday—hours before Iraqi leader Allawi met German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

The men are believed to belong to Ansar-al-Islam, which has mounted

attacks on U.S. and allied forces in Iraq since last year's U.S.-led invasion.

A fourth suspect, a man with Lebanese citizenship, was arrested in Berlin on suspicion of supporting a foreign terrorist organization and was being questioned by police, prosecutors' spokesman Hartmut Schneider said. Prosecutors did not release the suspects' names.

One of them, the suspected head of an Ansar-al-Islam cell in the southern German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, has been under investigation by Stuttgart authorities since October 2003, Der Spiegel newsweekly reported.

He was brought to the attention of German authorities by prosecutors in Milan, Italy, after a telephone call with

a key terror suspect in Italy, the magazine reported.

Before Allawi's visit, investigators who had the three suspects under surveillance noticed an increase in activity, phone calls and suspicious movements by one suspect that amounted to evidence of plans to attack, prosecutors say.

The suspects' phone calls grew more hectic after initial intelligence led officials to cancel a Thursday night meeting between Allawi and Iraqi exiles in Berlin, prosecutors say.

Ansar al-Islam, which was formed in the Kurdish parts of Iraq, is believed to include Arab al-Qaida members who fled the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in late 2002.

Colombian drug kingpin transported to US

MIAMI (AP)—A founder of a Colombian drug cartel that became the world's chief supplier of cocaine in the 1990s was transported to a Florida jail Saturday after being extradited from Colombia.

Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, 65, landed before dawn in a U.S. government plane and was driven to a downtown Miami jail. His first court appearance is set for Monday.

Rodriguez Orejuela is charged, along with his brother, Miguel, with running a drug network responsible for producing 80 percent of the U.S. cocaine supply in the 1990s. The brothers have been jailed in Colombia for nearly a decade.

Eleven others also face charges in the conspiracy, but Rodriguez Orejuela is the first defendant to be extradited to the United States. He faces life in prison if convicted.

The cartel became renowned for its ingenious methods of hiding tons of cocaine in everything from hollow lumber and concrete fence posts to chlorine cylinders, frozen broccoli and okra. Investigators believe a 15-ton seizure of cocaine-stuffed fence posts in Miami in 1991 followed more than 20 similar shipments that passed through undetected.

"The way the cocaine is concealed, it's brilliant," said Tom Cash, head of the Drug Enforcement Administration in Miami during the cartel's

heyday in the 1990s.

"If you go back and think of all the major traffickers from certainly the '90s and even into the 2000s, there's nobody in their class. They're in a class by themselves," Cash said. "By magnitude, by money, by class of corruption."

Prosecutors said Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela was the brains behind the concealment techniques, while Gilberto, nicknamed "The Chess Player," ran the family's financial empire, which included 400 discount drug stores in Colombia and a fence-post plant and lumber mill.

The brothers were arrested in Colombia in 1995 but continued to control the cartel from jail, prosecutors allege. Prosecutors believe the brothers turned over day-to-day operations to Miguel's eldest son, William Rodriguez Abadia, months before their arrests.

Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela was handed over to U.S. authorities by Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, who has approved the extradition of more than 200 Colombians in the last two years and is considered Washington's staunchest ally in Latin America.

Prosecutors have more wiretap evidence against Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela, but he may end up staying in Colombia due to his dialysis treatments, Cash said.



Drug kingpin Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, wearing handcuffs and a bulletproof vest is surrounded by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents before being extradited to the United States for trial Friday Dec. 3, 2004.

Health & Fitness

Dieters may face Splenda shortage

By J.M. HIRSCH
AP WRITER

Dieters hoping for a slew of new products with the sugar substitute Splenda may be disappointed next year. That's because the maker of sucralose, the key ingredient behind the increasingly ubiquitous no-calorie sweetener, is having trouble keeping up with demand.

Tate & Lyle PLC, the world's only manufacturer of sucralose, said interest has so outpaced expectations the company won't take on new U.S. customers until it has doubled production at its plant in McIntosh, Ala., sometime in early 2006.

The company also plans to open a second plant in Singapore, according to a written statement.

Buoyed by a surge in anti-sugar diets such as Atkins and South Beach, Splenda has enjoyed sweet success since its introduction in 2000, appearing in everything from soda and ice cream to candy and jams.

Splenda, which won fans with its sugar-like sweetness and stability in baking, now dominates the \$337 million U.S. retail market for sugar substitutes, beating out aspartame sweetener Equal, made by Chicago-based Merisant Corp.

"Sucralose has one of those problems that's both good and bad to have," said John Sicher, editor of Beverage Digest. "The demand is tremendous. The supply is constrained."

Splenda is sold to consumers as a table and baking sugar substitute by McNeil Nutritionals LLC, a Pennsylvania-based unit of Johnson & Johnson. Consumer sales won't be affected by the tight supply, a company spokeswoman said.



An unidentified woman pours Splenda into a cup in a coffee shop in Boston Friday, Dec. 3, 2004.

low-carb diet. Matthew Wiant, chief marketing officer for Atkins, estimates sucralose is used in as many as 10,000 products. But he doesn't think companies will have a problem switching to other sweeteners if they can't get it.

Lyn Nabors of the Calorie Control Council, a nonprofit trade group, said more companies probably will switch to sugar and sweetener blends, which have fewer calories but require less of the substitute.

Companies who insist on pure sucralose may have to delay new products, she said.

Dan Conner, a co-owner of Conner Bottle Works, a small Newfields, N.H., company that makes old-fashioned glass-bottled sodas, started feeling the Splenda squeeze two months ago. That's when he got a letter from Tate & Lyle telling him he could buy only small amounts of sucralose each month.

He said that for many years his company resisted making diet sodas because the available sugar substitutes didn't taste right. But sucralose was different, and this year Conner added two diet sodas.

But with supplies tightening, Conner now hopes another company will introduce a sucralose competitor, since the cost of sucralose has jumped significantly.

"Maybe we'll get some price wars going to help people like myself," he said.

Merisant, which acquired the Equal business from Monsanto Co. in 2000, recently sued McNeil Nutritionals, accusing it of false advertising by claiming Splenda is made from sugar.

McNeil Nutritionals claims the lawsuit is without merit, saying sucralose starts as cane sugar.

Sales of sucralose to manufacturers as an ingredient for use in other products are handled directly by Tate & Lyle, which is headquartered in London.

How many new sucralose-sweetened products will come to market is difficult to tell, says Sicher. It depends largely on how many prod-

ucts already have been developed and how much sucralose companies bought in advance.

He says it's too soon to tell how the tight supply might affect existing sucralose-based products at large companies, such as Coca-Cola Co.'s low-calorie "C2" cola, but Tate & Lyle said the Alabama plant will meet

the needs of existing customers.

A Coke spokeswoman wouldn't comment.

Small companies hoping to expand or introduce low-cal products likely will face the most trouble.

Atkins Nutritionals helped spur Splenda's surge by endorsing its use in the company's hugely popular

Ala. joins Calif. on medical marijuana

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP)—Alabama, which has some of the nation's toughest drug laws, has become an unlikely ally of California on medical marijuana use.

In a legal brief filed with the U.S. Supreme Court, which heard arguments Monday on California's medical marijuana law, Alabama Attorney General Troy King said states, not the federal government, should have the right to decide drug-control policies.

"I could not disagree more with the public policy that underlies the California law. I think it's flawed. I think it's bad public policy," King said in an interview. "But if somebody can go in and tell California you can't regulate drugs the way you want to regulate them in California, the next step is they could come to Alabama and tell us we can't do it."

Alabama is tough on marijuana use. Between 1995 and 2002, the state averaged nearly 9,500 arrests per year for marijuana possession, according to the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center. A person convicted three times of possessing marijuana in the state can end up serving as much as life in prison.

But the state's attorney general's office has become a defender of states' rights when pertinent cases go

before the Supreme Court. Alabama raised similar states' rights issues in October when the Supreme Court heard arguments on whether states should be able execute killers who are 16 and 17 years old.

King's brief in support of California was also signed by the attorneys general of Louisiana and Mississippi—two states also known for tough drug laws.

The issue before the Supreme Court is whether a California law that allows citizens to grow and possess marijuana for medical reasons should be struck down. The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the law last year, but the Bush administration appealed.

The administration has argued that allowing medical marijuana in California would undermine federal drug control programs, and that marijuana grown for medical use could end up on the illegal market and cross state lines.

King disagrees. His brief said the medical marijuana is grown and consumed within California, and "is not economic or commercial in any meaningful sense."

If things had gone differently 25 years ago, Alabama might have had the medical marijuana case before the Supreme Court rather than California.

Meth's sexual effect explains addictions

By BILL POOVEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (AP)—At a recent task force meeting on the epidemic of methamphetamine use in Appalachia, Gov. Phil Bredesen winced when a federal prosecutor described the illegal drug as an aphrodisiac. Doctors and government officials don't like to talk much about it, but there is an obvious reason people get hooked on methamphetamine: sex.

Meth eventually destroys the sex drive, but for a short while it can boost sexual appetite and performance more powerfully than drugs such as cocaine, doctors say.

"Who wouldn't want to use it? You lose weight and you have great sex," Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul Laymon said sarcastically at the meeting of the Tennessee task force.

For obvious reasons, government officials want to focus on the misery meth causes.

Use of the addictive drug can cause brain damage, violent behavior and hallucinations, and exposure to the potentially explosive vapors during the manufacture of meth

can cause respiratory problems, headaches and nausea. In many gay clubs in New York City and elsewhere, meth is often injected, putting users and their partners at risk for HIV, hepatitis C and other sexually transmitted diseases.

As for why the drug has such a hold on people, Dr. Mary Holley, an obstetrician who runs a Mothers Against Methamphetamine ministry in Albertville, Ala., and has interviewed men and women addicted to meth, said sex is the No. 1 reason people use it.

"The effect of an IV hit of methamphetamine is the equivalent of 10 orgasms all on top of each other lasting for 30 minutes to an hour, with a feeling of arousal that lasts for another day and a half," she said.

The effect doesn't last long.

"After you have been using it about six months or so you can't have sex unless you are high," Holley said. "After you have been using it a little bit longer you can't have sex even when you're high. Nothing happens. It doesn't work."

Dr. John Standridge, an addiction specialist with the Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services in Chat-

tanooga, said meth and other stimulants initially "rev up the dopamine nervous system in the brain. They rev it up and burn it out."

A National Institute on Drug Abuse survey on drug use and health in 2002 found that 12.4 million Americans at least 12 years old - or about 5 percent of the population - had tried meth at least once in their lifetimes. In a measure of how serious the problem is in Appalachia, a total of 1,083 clandestine methamphetamine labs were cleaned up in Tennessee in 2003 - more than in any other state.

A meth task force appointed by Bredesen is recommending tougher penalties and expanded treatment for addicts.

Meth's reputation as a sex drug is not unique.

"All substance abuse is frequently marketed as enhancing sex life or making you more attractive or a better social companion," said John Walters, the drug czar for President Bush. But he added that buying meth as an aphrodisiac is "buying under false pretenses."

"Hair falls out. Teeth fall out," Walters said. "That's not sexy."

Friendly little poker game brings big bucks for hosts

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My friend, "Wilma," recently purchased a house with her husband, "Ken." They frequently host "poker nights" and invite quite a few other friends—and friends of friends.

Since Wilma is presently unemployed, she has instituted a new policy for the games: Everyone must donate a percentage of their winnings to the house. This has offended quite a few of the players. Many of us have offered to bring snacks, drinks, etc., but the donation rule stands and is very much in effect.

May I add that Ken was shocked when Wilma asked for the money. How can we confront her without coming across as rude?

CONCERNED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR CONCERNED: Why are you worried about offending someone who is extorting money from you? I don't know how many people participate in these "poker nights," but with a percentage of every hand going to the house, Wilma must be making a tidy sum. It shouldn't be necessary to "confront her." If I were you, I'd alternate hosting these games among the participants.

DEAR ABBY: My father, who is still living, sexually abused me for six or seven years during my childhood. That was 21 years ago. I believe he has gotten help for his "problem" and won't harm anyone else, but I can't be sure. I have talked to Dad about it, and he says he would never hurt anyone like that again, that what he did was very wrong, and he's sorry he ever hurt me.

About six years ago, another family member asked me if I had been sexually abused, and I told her no at the urging of my parents and my husband. She and I both have children. I allow my son to stay with Dad, but not my daughter. The other family member has sons who stay with Dad occasionally.

I feel guilty for not telling her the truth. I would never forgive myself if something happened to her kids because I lied. Should I speak up and let the chips fall where they may, even though it could hurt a lot of people? Or should I just be quiet and observe? It has taken a lot of courage to write this letter, and your advice would be appreciated.

UNSURE IN THE PRAIRIES

DEAR UNSURE: Has it occurred to you that your relative asked you that question because your father had also abused her? Asking someone if a parent has abused her (or him) is not something that ordinarily comes up in conversation for no reason. Yes, you should definitely level with her—and then listen to what she has to say. You owe it to her and the children to be honest.

P.S. Child molesters have been known to abuse children of both genders, so don't procrastinate.

DEAR ABBY: I am 19 and have been in love with "Rob" ever since I was in fifth grade. I never felt good enough for him. Now that we're in college, I finally expressed my feelings, and we are starting a relationship. My only problem is people tell me that being with Rob is wrong because my sister is married to his first cousin. Is there some kind of rule that being together is taboo?

CONFUSED IN AMERICAN SAMOA

DEAR CONFUSED: Not that I ever heard of. You and Rob are not blood relatives, and I know of no taboo against marrying him should you both decide to tie the knot.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby

Life & Style

Peru's Mantilla Garcia crowned Miss World

By STEPHANIE HOO
AP WRITER

SANYA, China (AP)—Miss Peru, Maria Julia Mantilla Garcia, an aspiring high school teacher, was crowned Miss World 2004 on Saturday night in this southern Chinese beach resort.

Miss Dominican Republic, Claudia Julissa Cruz Rodriguez, was the first runner-up and Miss USA Nancy Randall was second runner-up.

Mantilla Garcia, 20, wearing a turquoise gown, blew kisses to the crowd as she was crowned. The title carries a \$100,000 prize.

Organizers said the winner was selected by pageant viewers voting by Internet, phone and mobile phone text message. Vote totals and other details of the voting weren't immediately released.

A total of 107 women from around the world competed for the crown in this beach resort on Hainan Island in the South China Sea.

"I'm very surprised but I'm also very happy," Mantilla Garcia told reporters. She said she wanted to do charitable work as Miss World and "help all the people that I can."

The pageant included performances by American pop singer Lionel Richie.

A panel of celebrity judges



Miss Peru Maria Julia Mantilla Garcia, center, celebrates with other contestants after being crowned as the new Miss World in Sanya on China's tropical Hainan Island Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004. Others are Miss Vietnam Huyen Nguyen Thi, left, Miss Uganda Barbara Kimbugwe, right, and Miss Colombia Paola Andrea Marino Garcia, second right.

was on hand to pick the winner in case the high-tech voting system failed.

They included Australian television star Kate Ritchie, West Indian cricket legend Sir Viv Richards, Chinese fashion photographer Li Shaobai and Krish Naidoo, an Ireland-based businessman.

The hosts were British model Lisa Snowdon, Hong Kong television host Angela Chow and Troy McClain, a former contestant on the U.S. reality TV series "The Apprentice."

Once was just a remote tropical outpost in the South China Sea, the pageant brought glamour to Sanya, providing a tran-

quil setting for a pageant that in 2002 was forced to flee Nigeria after deadly riots.

Both sides found the partnership so rewarding that organizers of the coming 55th Miss World contest announced on Friday that the London-based pageant will be held in Sanya in 2005 for the third straight year.

Charity pits Hollywood vs. hockey vets

By JOHN WAWROW
AP SPORTS WRITER

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—It was difficult to tell who was more excited: Michael J. Fox for playing alongside former Buffalo Sabres star Gilbert Perreault, or the other way around.

"Man, it's very cool. It's thrilling," Fox said Saturday after meeting Perreault, a member of the Sabres' famed French Connection of the 1970s. "I mean, I'm skating with the French Connection today. Give me a break. It's just insane. That's nuts. I love it."

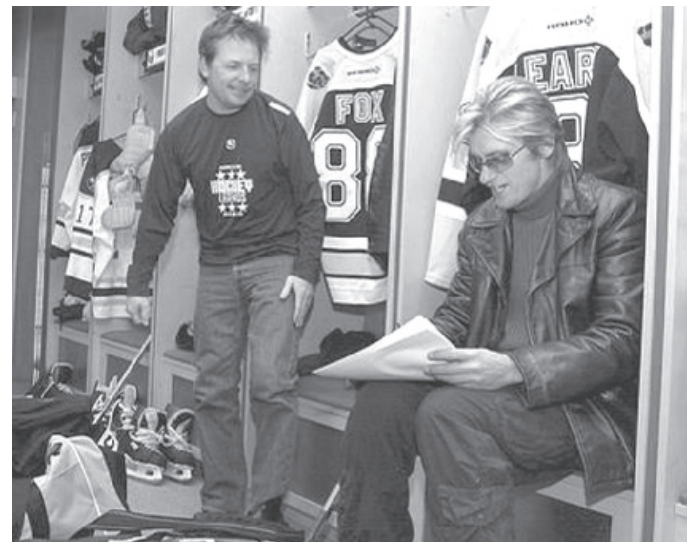
The feeling was more than mutual.

"I had a big thrill playing with him," Perreault said. "He's got a lot of guts. And good luck to him. He's a wonderful man."

Hollywood met Hockey Legends in Buffalo as part of former Sabres captain Pat LaFontaine's Champions in Courage charity game to raise money for Buffalo Women and Children's Hospital.

The event, which included a corporate game and banquet on Friday, raised more than \$200,000 for LaFontaine's goal of building a computer playroom for children at the hospital the NHL Hall-of-Famer regularly visited while playing for the Sabres in the 1990s.

And Fox's participation



Michael J. Fox, left, watches Denis Leary autograph a "Companions of Courage" hockey poster before getting dressed to play in the HSBC Arena in Buffalo, N.Y., Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004.

added a special significance to the game.

He's the "Back to the Future," "Family Ties" and "Spin City" star who remains active while suffering from Parkinson's disease, a chronic disorder of the central nervous system that causes tremors, stiffness and loss of balance.

"Very inspiring," Perreault said. "He's a great gentleman."

Fox might have curtailed his acting career since retiring from "Spin City" in 2000, but he still enjoys an occasional game of hockey. This was his second time on the ice in the past two

months after participating in comedian-actor Denis Leary's charity game in Boston.

Fox, however, is the first to poke fun at his hockey prowess, going back to his days growing up in Canada.

"I played in Ontario and then in Alberta and in Vancouver, and I never got good wherever I played," Fox said with a laugh.

What he lacked in grace, speed and a scoring touch on Saturday, he made up for in perseverance, playing a regular shift at right wing, first with LaFontaine as his center and then with Perreault.

Spielberg, Cruise spark town's interest

NAUGATUCK, Conn. (AP)—"Free hugs and haircuts for Tom Cruise & Steven Spielberg" read one sign outside Savior Hair as a few giggling hairdressers tried to lure the actor and director into the salon.

Cruise and Spielberg were on set filming scenes at the Uniroyal Chemical plant for "War of the Worlds," based on H.G. Wells' novel about an invasion from outer space.

They arrived by helicopter and landed in a secluded parking lot behind the plant. But that didn't stop fans from lingering in front of police barriers as early as 5 a.m. Friday to see if they could spot them.

"If I find Tom, I want to bring him home with me. I'll say, 'You don't need a hotel! I have plenty of room,'" said Maria Furtado, a 56-year-old grandmother.

Meanwhile, Paramount Pictures officials remained tight-lipped about which scenes were being shot for the movie, also starring Tim Robbins and Dakota Fanning, which is set to open June 29.

A scout for Paramount found the idled chemical plant about a month ago.

Pastimes



James, Ilgauskas lead Cavaliers over Wizards



CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James scored 24 points, Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 21 and the Cleveland Cavaliers won their third straight game after an 0-3 start, beating the Washington Wizards 105-74 Saturday.

"We're just getting started," James said. "We're getting better every game."

Drew Gooden added 15 rebounds and 14 points while Jeff McInnis had 13 points and 11 assists for the Cavaliers.

James scored nine of the Cavaliers' first 11 in the fourth, taking over just as he did Wednesday when he outscored Phoenix 17-14 in the final 12 minutes and the Cavs overcame a 19-point deficit to win.

"He's the best," Cavs coach Paul Silas said. "He's unbelievable. He wants the ball and he wants the responsibility. Everything we need, he provides. He's so special."

The reigning rookie of the year came into the game as the NBA's second leading scorer and Cleveland's undisputed leader. Entering the game, James had accounted for 40 percent of the Cavaliers' points in the fourth quarter.

Gilbert Arenas scored 25 points to lead the Wizards. Antawn Jamison had 14 and nine rebounds for Washington, which was held to 28 points under its average.

Mavericks 94, Nets 78

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jerry Stackhouse hit all five of his third-quarter shots and scored a season-high 28 points, leading Dallas over New Jersey.

Dirk Nowitzki added 31 points, seven rebounds, seven assists and four of Dallas' 12 steals in helping the revamped Mavericks win for the sixth time in seven games.

Richard Jefferson had 28 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Nets, who lost for the third time in four home games. Point guard Zoran Planinic had a career-high 16 points and Eric Williams added 15.

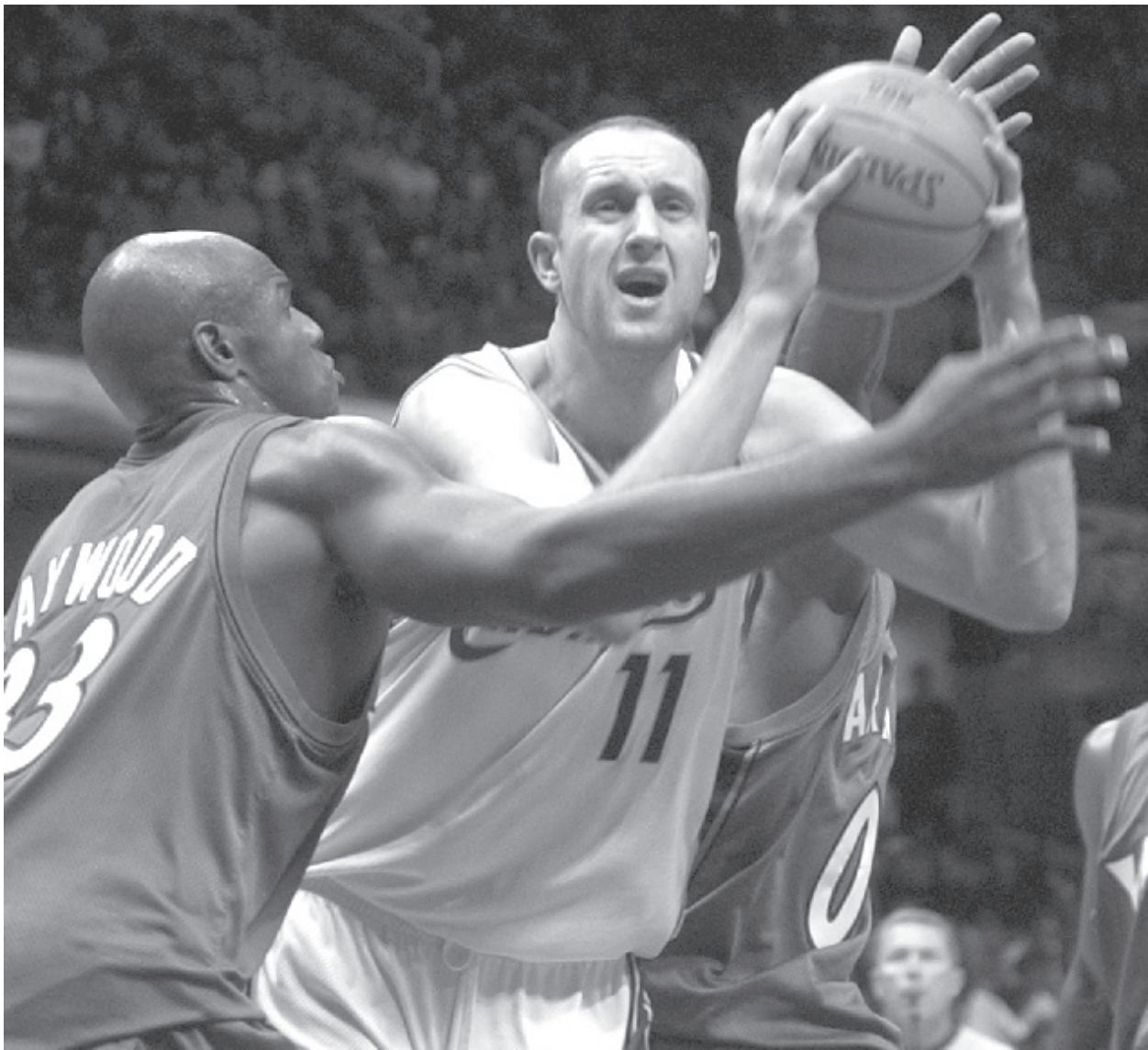
Acquired from Washington in the offseason to give Dallas a threat off the bench, Stackhouse had struggled with his shot. He came into the game shooting 36.4 percent, including a 4-of-14 effort in a loss at Orlando this week.

Warriors 103, Bobcats 87

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Jason Richardson scored 27 points and Troy Murphy added 22 to lead Golden State over expansion Charlotte.

It was the first win for coach Mike Montgomery, who opened his NBA career with six consecutive losses and put Golden State in danger of besting the franchise futility mark set at the start of the 1997-98 season by opening 0-9.

The Warriors built a 22-point, first-half lead against the undermanned Bobcats. Down to 10 players already



Cleveland Cavaliers' Zydrunas Ilgauskas, from Lithuania, (11) tries to get past Washington Wizards' Brendan Haywood (33) in the third quarter, Saturday, Nov. 13, 2004, in Cleveland.

because of injury, Emeka Okafor left with a sprained ankle.

Gerald Wallace led Charlotte with 22 points.

Spurs 103, Hawks 88

In Atlanta, Tim Duncan scored 26 points and grabbed 18 rebounds, and Bruce Bowen scored a career-high 22 points to help San Antonio defeat Atlanta.

Antoine Walker led the Hawks with 23 points, including four 3-pointers in the final quarter. Atlanta's only other scorer in double figures was Al Harrington with 10 points.

Spurs center Rasho Nesterovic had a double-double with 10 points and 11 rebounds.

The Hawks, who set a team record with only 25 second-half points Tuesday night against Cleveland, were back in a scoring rut early against the Spurs. Atlanta trailed 44-35 at halftime after shooting 28 percent in over the first two quarters.

Pacers 103, Knicks 97

In Indianapolis, Jermaine O'Neal had 33 points and 12 rebounds, Ron Artest marked his 25th birthday with 22 points and Stephen Jackson added 19

as Indiana beat New York.

It was Indiana's fourth game in five nights, and because of injuries the Pacers had only 10 players available and used just eight, with all five starters logging at least 38 minutes.

Artest then iced the game with two free throws before Jerome Williams scored for New York at the buzzer.

Nazr Mohammed added a season-high 20 points for the Knicks.

Bucks 94, Hornets 91

In Milwaukee, Michael Redd scored 30 points, and Keith Van Horn and Desmond Mason added 17 each to lead Milwaukee over New Orleans.

Joe Smith added 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Bucks, who have won three straight games following a season-opening loss to Orlando. New Orleans, led by Darrell Armstrong's 21 points, fell to 0-6.

Redd had 12 points in the third quarter to help the Bucks to a 71-63 lead. He made seven straight shots, including three in the third quarter, before finally missing with 5:02 to play.

Clippers 97, Bulls 96

In Chicago, Marko Jaric scored 17 of

his 19 points in the second half as Los Angeles rallied from a 24-point deficit to beat winless Chicago.

Corey Maggette led Los Angeles with 23 points, and Chris Wilcox added 14 points, including two thunderous dunks in the final quarter when the Clippers finished off the victory.

The Bulls blew a 49-25 second-quarter lead and fell to 0-4.

Eddy Curry led the Bulls with 20, but had only six in the second half, and shot just 8-for-20. Tyson Chandler added 17 points and had 13 rebounds.

The Clippers played their third road game in four nights after arriving at 2:30 a.m. from New York, where they'd lost to the Knicks on Friday night.

Lakers 84, Rockets 79

In Houston, Lamar Odom had 20 points and 13 rebounds, and Los Angeles held on to give coach Rudy Tomjanovich a victory over his former team. The Lakers blew a 22-point lead they held in the third quarter.

In an emotional pregame ceremony, Tomjanovich was honored for his 33 years of service to the Houston organization as a player, scout, assistant coach and head coach. He led the

Rockets to NBA championships in 1994 and 1995.

Tomjanovich had his new team way ahead early in the third quarter, despite a strong performance by Yao Ming who had 32 points and seven rebounds. Jim Jackson added 15 for the Rockets.

Kobe Bryant was only 2-for-7 in the first half but he scored the Lakers' first nine points of the third quarter. He finished with 19 points and 11 rebounds.

Jazz 108, Pistons 93

In Salt Lake City, Mehmet Okur scored 19 points against his former team, and Carlos Boozer had 20 points and 13 rebounds, leading Utah past Detroit.

Andrei Kirilenko scored 17 points and Gordan Giricek finished with 15 points for the Jazz, who scored more than 100 points for the fifth time in six games.

The Jazz, who won just three of their six 100-point games last season, won for the fifth time in six games.

Defending NBA champion Detroit was without Ben Wallace, who missed the game because of a death in his family, and Chauncey Billups, sidelined with a sprained ankle.

Richard Hamilton scored 19 of his 21 points in the second half for Detroit. Antonio McDyess had 18 points and 12 rebounds.

Kings 113, Suns 111

In Phoenix, Chris Webber had a season-high 28 points and 10 rebounds, helping Sacramento beat Phoenix and shake off its worst loss of the early season.

The Kings lost by 30 points at Seattle on Wednesday night, staggering to a 1-4 start.

Peja Stojakovic matched his season high with 23 points, Mike Bibby scored 20 and Brad Miller had six of his 14 points in the final quarter.

Amare Stoudemire and Steve Nash had 29 points apiece for the Suns, who dropped their second straight after a 4-0 start.

Trail Blazers 105, Raptors 102

In Portland, Oregon, Zach Randolph had 27 points and 16 rebounds, and Portland returned home after a winless road trip to beat Toronto.

Lamond Murray's 3-pointer at the final buzzer appeared to tie the game at 105, but further review by officials showed that the shot was too late.

The Raptors trailed by as many as 20 points in the second half, but Rafer Alston hit the second of consecutive 3-pointers with 2:04 left to give Toronto a brief 100-98 lead. Damon Stoudamire answered with a jumper, and the Blazers led the rest of the way.

Toronto's Vince Carter had his lowest point total of the season, with just four in 22 minutes.

No. 24 Memphis tops George Mason, 75-58



MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Sean Banks had 20 points and 11 rebounds to help No. 24 Memphis beat George Mason 75-58 on Saturday night in the second round of the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic.

Memphis (2-0) will face St. Mary's in the national semifinals on Thursday night at Madison Square Garden

in New York. In the other semifinal, No. 6 Syracuse will play No. 12 Mississippi State.

Banks struggled from the field, hitting only five of his 20 shots, but was 10-of-12 from the free-throw line.

Rodney Carney and Darius Washington added 12 points each, and Anthony Rice finished with 11. Joey Dorsey had his second consecutive double-double

with 10 points and 12 rebounds.

Jai Lewis led George Mason (1-1) with 19 points and 10 rebounds, and Lamar Butler added 13 points. The Patriots struggled from the field, shooting 28 percent, including 3-of-19 from 3-point range.

Memphis led 41-32 at the half, but George Mason stayed close despite shooting 29 percent from the field,

including 2-of-10 from 3-point range. The Patriots hit all but one of their 13 free throws in the half.

Lewis had nine points for George Mason, but was hampered with foul problems, sitting out the final 6 minutes of the half.

George Mason chipped into the lead early in the second half and eventually cut it to five at 49-44, before Memphis

clicked off seven straight points, part of a 12-1 run, to build it back to double digits.

Lewis did his best to keep George Mason in the game. Using his size underneath and spin moves on the baseline, he scored seven of George Mason's eight points in on one stretch, cutting the lead to 63-54, the only time the Patriots got the Memphis lead under double digits in the final 12 minutes.

Byrd decisions McCline to keep IBF title

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP BOXING WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Chris Byrd felt the power and found the canvas. Then Jameel McCline found out what made Byrd a heavyweight champion in the first place. Giving away 56 pounds and several inches, Byrd survived a second-round knockdown and a bigger man’s punch to retain his IBF heavyweight title Saturday night on a split decision by the narrowest of margins.

The fight was the best of two title bouts at Madison Square Garden. In the other, WBA champion John Ruiz retained his title despite be-



Chris Byrd punches Jameel McCline in the fourth round of the IBF Heavyweight Championship fight at New York’s Madison Square Garden Saturday, Nov. 13, 2004.

Swimmer Phelps faces fans after arrest

BALTIMORE (AP)—Michael Phelps made his first public appearance Saturday since being arrested on drunken driving charges and acknowledged he made a mistake.

The 19-year-old swimmer who won eight medals at the Summer Olympics faced fans at a health expo in the Baltimore Convention Center to sign autographs.

“It can happen to anybody,” Phelps said. “Anybody can make this mistake, and I just really want to reach out to every individual who even possibly thinks about making this mistake and make sure that they make the right decision.”

Around 11:30 p.m. on Nov. 4, a state trooper stopped Phelps after he ran a stop sign in his SUV near Salisbury, according to police. The trooper saw signs of intoxication and arrested Phelps.

The Olympic medalist was charged with driving under the influence, driving while impaired, violation of a license restriction and failure to obey a stop sign. Maryland’s drinking age is 21.

Many fans there said his arrest doesn’t change their opinion of him and many applauded him for coming forward and apologizing.

“I’ve been 19 before,” said Stan Cheung, 29. “It was irresponsible but he’s young and everybody makes mistakes.”

As a mother of five, Bonnie Jacobson said she has a different perspective.

“He’s an idol and you look up to an idol with a lot of respect. I was disappointed in him,” she said.

ing knocked down twice and penalized once in an ugly fight with Andrew Golota.

Ruiz also lost his trainer, Norman Stone, who ran across the ring after the first round and threw a punch at Golota’s trainer and then was ejected in the eighth round after repeatedly arguing with referee Randy Neumann.

Ruiz, though, came on strong late in the fight to win 114-111 on two cards and 113-112 on the third. The Associated Press had Golota ahead, 113-112.

As crafty a fighter as the heavyweight division has seen in recent times, Byrd needed every bit of his skills to come on strong in the later rounds to win a split 12-round decision that was in doubt until the final judge’s tally was added up.

The good friends hugged as the highly entertaining fight ended and the crowd of 12,777 stood and cheered. Byrd won by 115-112 and 114-113, while McCline was favored 114-112 on the third scorecard.

The AP card favored Byrd, 115-113.

“The way I fought back showed I am a true champion. I had to dig down. He weighed 270 pounds,” Byrd said. “I definitely did enough to win the fight. I am a champion.”

Byrd, who weighed 214 pounds to McCline’s 270, was in trouble early, going down in the second round from a right hand and taking punishment from an aggressive McCline. He was trailing badly after five rounds, before beginning to find his mark and score with quick inside combinations.

It was the third title defense for the southpaw Byrd, and the third fight that was close until the end. In his last fight, he retained the title with a draw over Golota.

“He has fast hands and he took me out of my game plan,” McCline said. “That was the difference.”

In other fights:
□ Evander Holyfield was dominated once again, this time

by journeyman Larry Donald, but refused to call it a career. At the age of 42, Holyfield lost almost every round to Donald and has now won only two of his last nine fights.

□ Former heavyweight champion Hasim Rahman put himself in contention for one of the major titles by stopping an outclassed Kali Meehan after four rounds. Rahman never knocked Meehan down but was giving him such punishment at the end of the fourth round that Meehan’s corner threw in the towel after the round ended.

Byrd (38-2-1) didn’t have the power to knock McCline down, but stood and traded punches in the later rounds, getting the better of the bigger man in almost every exchange and giving a boxing clinic to both McCline (31-4-3) and the Garden crowd.

McCline was staggering toward the end when a flurry by Byrd seemed to hurt him with 45 seconds left in the 11th round and Byrd in command.

“It was not everything I imagined it would be because I expected to go home with the title,” McCline said. “It looked like I fell apart a little toward the end and that may have cost me.”

McCline appeared on his way to a quick end when he floored Byrd late in the second round. But Byrd got up, weathered the storm and began landing with quick combinations.

“I can’t believe it happened,” Byrd said of the knockdown. “He hit me right behind the ear. It was a perfect shot.”

Like Byrd, Ruiz was in danger of losing his title early. He was dropped by a counter right late in the second round by Golota, then went down a few seconds later with a right to the top of the head.

The fight disintegrated from there into a brawling, mauling affair that pleased nobody except Ruiz, who has a history of fighting ugly and winning unpopular decisions.

No. 7 Utah pastes Wyoming, 45-28

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP)—A brownout that delayed the start for 99 minutes was the only thing that slowed down No. 7 Utah on Saturday night. After power was restored, Utah rolled to a 45-28 victory over Wyoming, clinching a second straight Mountain West title and boosting the Utes’ hopes for a marquee bowl.

Utah’s school-record 10-0 start combined with Wisconsin’s 49-14 loss to Michigan State could move the Utes into the top six in the BCS standings and a likely berth in the Fiesta Bowl. Utah is 6-0 in conference play.

Alex Smith passed for 244 yards and three touchdowns and ran for a game-high 105 yards and another TD as Utah scored on its first five possessions. Smith, who completed 17 of 27 passes, has 27 touchdown

passes and only two interceptions on the season.

Steve Savoy had a 15-yard run that put Utah up 38-7 and a 10-yard TD among his six receptions as the Utes racked up 488 yards of offense.

John Madsen’s 15-yard catch made it 45-14 on the final play of the third quarter.

Wyoming (6-4, 3-3) had no answer for the Utes’ attack, which came close to its averages of 45.8 points and 500 yards.

Helped by Wyoming’s ineptness, Utah piled up 318 yards and a 31-7 lead by halftime. The Cowboys coughed up the ball on three of their first four drives.

Morgan Scalley’s sixth interception of the season set up a 26-yard pass from Smith to Paris Warren, putting Utah up 24-7 with 11:04 left in the first half.

Utah bolted to a 14-0 lead on Smith’s 27-yard keeper and

Marty Johnson’s 1-yard run before Wyoming scored on a 41-yard pass from Corey Bramlet to Jovon Bouknight.

David Carroll’s 25-yard field goal left the Utes up 17-7 after one quarter.

Bramlet, who passed for 278 yards but was intercepted twice, scored on two short runs in the second half and tossed a 20-yard TD to Bouknight with 34 seconds left after the Utes’ only turnover.

Smith’s opening touchdown came after Corey Dodds recovered a Wyoming fumble on the game’s second play.

Marquess Ledbetter’s interception on the Cowboys’ next drive led to a 64-yard Utah march capped by Johnson’s TD run.

The start was delayed 1 hour, 39 minutes because of a partial power outage, leaving fans shivering in twilight and a 15-degree wind chill until kickoff at 6:45 p.m.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS					Jacksonville St. 31, E. Illinois 21 Kent St. 69, E. Michigan 17 Miami (Ohio) 42, W. Michigan 21 Michigan 42, Northwestern 20 Michigan St. 49, Wisconsin 14 Penn St. 22, Indiana 18 Pittsburgh 41, Notre Dame 38 Purdue 24, Ohio St. 17 SE Missouri 31, Tennessee Tech 28, 2OT SW Missouri St. 34, Youngstown St. 28 St. Joseph's, Ind. 34, Butler 0 Texas 27, Kansas 23 Valparaiso 34, Aurora 0
EASTERN CONFERENCE					SOUTHWEST
Atlantic Division					Arkansas 35, Mississippi 3 Jackson St. 45, Prairie View 28 Oklahoma St. 49, Baylor 21 Stephen F. Austin 55, McNeese St. 7 Texas A&M 32, Texas Tech 25, OT Texas State 35, Nicholls St. 12
	W	L	Pct	GB	FAR WEST
Boston	3	2	.600	—	Boise St. 56, San Jose St. 49, 2OT California 42, Washington 12 Colorado 38, Kansas St. 31 Colorado St. 45, UNLV 10 E. Washington 51, Montana St. 44, OT Idaho St. 24, N. Arizona 17 Montana 52, Sacramento St. 21 New Mexico 21, BYU 14 Oregon St. 24, Stanford 19 Portland St. 34, Weber St. 15 San Diego 35, Wagner 14 San Diego St. 37, Air Force 31 UCLA 34, Oregon 26
Toronto	4	3	.571	—	
Philadelphia	3	3	.500	1/2	
New York	2	3	.400	1	
New Jersey	2	4	.333	1 1/2	
Southeast Division					COLLEGE BASKETBALL
Miami	4	2	.667	—	EAST
Orlando	4	2	.667	—	Pratt 73, Sarah Lawrence 43 St. Vincent 95, Penn St.-New Kensington 60
Washington	3	3	.500	1	SOUTH
Charlotte	1	4	.200	2 1/2	Brescia 72, Tenn. Wesleyan 46 Houston Baptist 77, William Carey 63 Pikeville 83, Berea 69
Atlanta	1	5	.167	3	MIDWEST
Central Division					Culver-Stockton 89, Concordia Seminary 64 Mary 76, Montana St.-Northern 63 Mount Marty 85, Dakota St. 79 Mount Vernon Nazarene 67, Daemen 51 Northwestern, Iowa 90, Jamestown 76 Notre Dame, Ohio 121, Mary Grove 88 Trinity, Ill. 67, Purdue-Calumet 64
Milwaukee	3	1	.750	1/2	SOUTHWEST
Indiana	5	2	.714	—	Oklahoma Baptist 82, Jarvis Christian 66
Cleveland	3	3	.500	1 1/2	FAR WEST
Detroit	3	3	.500	1 1/2	No scores reported from the FAR WEST.
Chicago	0	4	.000	3 1/2	TOURNAMENT
WESTERN CONFERENCE					CEDARVILLE INVITATIONAL Third Place
Southwest Division					Aquinas 85, Miami (Ohio), Middletown 50
Dallas	6	1	.857	—	EXHIBITION
San Antonio	5	1	.833	1/2	Alabama 89, Athletes in Action 63 Dayton 63, Findlay 61 Drake 65, N. Dakota St. 49 Fordham 83, Felician 57 Maryland 89, Carleton 60 N. Illinois 94, Laval-Quebec 55 Oklahoma 95, Cent. Oklahoma 71
Houston	3	4	.429	3	SPORTS TRANSACTIONS
Memphis	2	4	.333	3 1/2	MLB
New Orleans	0	6	.000	5 1/2	TORONTO BLUE JAYS—Claimed RHP Seung Song off waivers from the Montreal Expos.
Northwest Division					NBA
Seattle	5	1	.833	—	NEW ORLEANS HORNETS—Placed = Rodney Rogers on the injured list. Activated G Junior Harrington from the injured list.
Utah	5	1	.833	—	NFL
Minnesota	3	2	.600	1 1/2	PITTSBURGH STEELERS—Released QB Brian St. Pierre. Signed RB Dante Brown from the practice squad.
Portland	3	3	.500	2	By The Associated Press
Denver	2	4	.333	3	LOCAL SCORES
Pacific Division					CFL STANDINGS
Phoenix	4	2	.667	—	Shell Chiefs 6 0 1.000 -
L.A. Clippers	4	3	.571	1/2	Miller Barbarians 3 3 .500 3
L.A. Lakers	4	4	.500	1	Verizon Nitro 0 6 .000 6
Sacramento	2	4	.333	2	SML STANDINGS
Golden State	1	6	.143	3 1/2	Pirates 4 2 .750 -
Yesterday's Games					North Stars 4 3 .571 1/2
Cleveland 105, Washington 74					Kautz Glass 3 4 .428 1
Dallas 94, New Jersey 78					Hustlers 2 4 .250 2
San Antonio 103, Atlanta 88					SML BOX SCORES
Golden State 103, Charlotte 87					Game 1
Indiana 103, New York 97					North Stars 0 0 1 0 1 2 4 0 0 8
L.A. Lakers 84, Houston 79					Pirates 1 2 0 0 0 1 0 0 2 6
L.A. Clippers 97, Chicago 96					Game 2
Milwaukee 94, New Orleans 91					Hustlers 0 0 1 1 0 0 1 0 0 3
Utah 108, Detroit 93					Kautz Glass 4 1 0 0 4 0 0 0 - 9
Sacramento 113, Phoenix 111					
Portland 105, Toronto 102?					



Triathlete Dick Pierce finishes the bicycle portion of the Enticer Triathlon and readies for the transition to the run on Saturday, Nov. 6.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Triathletes invade Marpi anew

By **BRAD E. RUSZALA**
REPORTER



While many people across the CNMI were getting ready for their weekend barbecues at the beach, several others gathered at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi for a swim, bike ride, and a run, as the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation hosted an "Enticer Triathlon" in the wee hours of last Saturday, Nov. 6.

In an effort to attract more people to the sport of three, the NMITF put together a series of races aimed at preparing would-be triathletes for the Olympic distance triathlon in Tinian in February.

NMITF volunteers and organizers were surprised at the large turnout, as 36 racers showed up to take part in the

event. Adding to the delight of organizers is that 31 of the participants had never competed in a triathlon of any distance.

Organizers and volunteers made a list of those needing bikes, helmets and goggles, and began to register the rookies.

Due to the larger than expected turn-out, several of the experienced triathletes opted to volunteer to help as race buddies, transition help, or as course safety officers.

NMITF president Stephan Samoyloff assembled the mass of first-timers for a pre-race briefing at the pool before Saipan swim coach Mike Stewart, blew the whistle to start the event at 8:05am.

The first-time racers used a variety of methods to negotiate the 200-meter swim, to include a few who chose to utilize fins and snorkels. Though no two

strokes were the same, the athletes were in unison in their desire to try something new.

From the pool, racers quickly made the transition to the bike portion of the course, which featured an approximately 3-kilometer ride northward from the pool to the dump, where they turned around and headed back.

After reaching the driveway to the pool, volunteers racked their bikes while racers then transitioned to the 1km run north to the FEBC road sign, before returning to the pool.

The first place finisher overall it was Saipan International School teacher Wayne Bramlett. The experienced triathlete pulled off the fastest combined time of 25:09 to finish ahead of Gary Padsing in second (25:26), and Caleb Gabbie in third (26:06).

Gabbie also finished first in

the youth category ahead of second place Brad Brostrom (29:00—ninth overall), and third place Justin Alexander (32:13—14th overall).

Betty Johnson placed first among the women with 32:03, for 13th overall, while Brenda Schultz (17th overall) was just a minute behind in second place with a 33:03, followed by third place Laura Hohman with a time of 34:00.

The sole female youth competitor was Natasha Good who finished with a time of 28:06 and in 7th place overall.

The NMITF will continue the series with a second enticer at Pau Pau Beach on Saturday, Dec. 11, when the distances are increased to a 600-meter swim, an 18-kilometer bike, and 4-kilometer run. Registration and start times have yet to be announced.

Ada, eight others elected to board



Nine volunteer district administrators were elected to three-year terms on the Little League International Board of Directors, it was announced recently by Stephen D. Keener, president and chief executive officer of Little League Baseball and Softball.

The newly-elected directors are: James Ada of Saipan, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (District 1); Frank Bergfield of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (District 1); Danny Cavallo of Syracuse, N.Y. (District 8); Jim Chavez of Auburn, Wash. (District 10); Val Domingue, Jr. of Lafayette, La. (District 1); Bob Gibson of Dunedin, Fla. (District 12); James Joseph of Burlington, Wis. (District 1); Felix M. Rivera of Arroyo, Puerto Rico (District 13), and Marc St. Pierre of Quebec, Ontario, Canada (District 4).

The nine new members were nominated by their fellow district administrators at the Little League International Congress in Virginia Beach, Va., last April. Each of these new directors brings a wealth of experience and volunteer leadership to serve this board, said Keener.

Its that experience at all levels of the Little League program that makes them highly qualified to help govern



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

James Ada, standing right, of Saipan joins eight other newly elected Little League International Board of Directors.

the worlds largest organized youth sports program. A member of the International Board of Directors for eight years, Timothy J. Hughes from Williamsport, has served as chairman-elect since 2001, and succeeds W. Dwight Raiford of Harlem, N.Y. Raiford will remain on the board of directors. It is an honor and a privilege to be elected chairman of the Little League International Board of Directors, said

Hughes. I have been a part of the Little League program for many years, and at each level of my association I have been proud of the role Little League plays in the lives of the children

and volunteers it serves. I see my time as chairman as an opportunity to continue to educate, and help expand the program. Hughes is the first chairman of the Little League International Board of Directors to have graduated from Little League. As a boy, he played in the Little Mountaineer Little League in South Williamsport. Dennis Lewin of Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., was elected chairman-elect, and will serve in that capacity until the election of nine new directors in 2007.

Little League Baseball, founded in 1939, is the world's largest organized youth sports program, with nearly 2.7 million participants and a million

volunteers in all 50 U.S. states and 66 other countries. The Little League International Board of Directors, a volunteer board, is responsible for the management of the property and affairs of Little League. At the meeting, the board heard presentations on Little League Internationals newly created league development department and electronic newsletter.

The league development department will take a more pro-active approach to inquiries from potential new leagues. The Little League E-Newsletter will be sent electronically to more than 250,000 adult volunteers and players each month. **(PR)**

Still no takers for Thursday 8-ball

Corner Pocket owner and billiards *conisseur* Ken Phillips is once again inviting pool players on island to partake of competitive 8-ball action at his sports bar.

A week after announcing that the favorite billiards venue of the island's slickest pool players is moving its regular Tuesday 8-Ball Tournament to Thursday, Phillips reported that, "nobody has been biting."

Phillips said he would try again this Nov. 18 to restart the 8-ball event, which promises a level playing field for ace cue artists and not so good ones alike.

The renamed Thursday 8-Ball Tournament is scheduled to roll off 8:30pm Thursday. Participants must fork over \$15 to enter the double-elimination competition. Progressive pot for 8-ball in a break will apply.

Ladies will also be given a handicap and players are given free practice rounds before the tournament starts provided they buy drinks from the bar.

First place is assured half of the

total entrance fee with runner-up and third places also coming home with cash prizes. The Top 3 will also receive Budweiser giveaways from MARPAC.

Corner Pocket's Thursday 8-Ball Tournament can host a maximum of 16 players.

Phillips and Corner Pocket also continues to host the ever-popular Monday 9-Ball Tournament. As its name suggests, the tournament rolls off every Monday beginning at 9pm.

The competition uses a handicap to give beginners a chance against top-caliber players. Entry fee is \$10 and first place and second place are guaranteed prize money.

Both the regular 9-ball and 8-ball tournaments use the rules of the Billiards Congress of America.

For more information on the regular Monday 9-Ball Tournament and upcoming Thursday 8-Ball Tournament, please contact Phillips at 233-POOL (7665). **(Mark Rabago)**



NORTH

From Page 28

the fifth and added two singles, a ribby and a score to guide the Stars.

The second game ended with a swap in the standings, as the Kautz Glass Glazers (3-4) leap-frogged the defending champion Rep. Dave Atalig Hustlers (2-4) into third place with a 9-3 upset before the sunset.

The Glazers scored all of the runs that they would need in

the bottom of the first inning when Tyrone Omar, Anthony Palacios, J.P. Sablan, and Ben Taisican made their way home in the four run, four hit stanza, and relied on solid pitching to carry them home.

Hurler Franco Flores pitched six and a third innings, fanning four and allowing a pair of runs off of four hits before David Camacho slammed the door shut with a one run, two hit, and four strikeout performance in the final three and two thirds.

The Glazers received plenty of offense from their big "O" as Omar went 3-for-5 on the game with a pair of singles, a double, and two scores. Teammate Palacios also went 3-for-5 with a trio of singles and two scores, and Sablan did the same.

This past weekend's games fell victim to a barrage of airborne water droplets and remain to be rescheduled.

while Togawa's 144 smoked the field in the ladies division. Blanco, meanwhile, finished tied with four others atop the leaderboard in Class-B but yielded the Top 2 spots because of tiebreaks.

von Siebenthal, who also played for the team, said Saipan was awarded the championship cup during a gala dinner/Halloween night held at the Hyatt Regency Manila on Oct. 30.

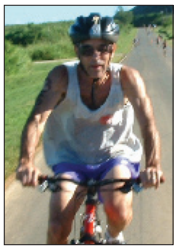
Sam Cheng, food and beverage director of the hotel and also a member of the champion team,

said the three-day, three-night golf package to Manila was also made possible by Continental Micronesia, which gave a special discount to the delegation.

Cheng and von Siebenthal both said that aside from the two days of wonderful golf, played at the mountain resort town south of Manila, Saipan Club at the Hyatt members also were able to shop at the Philippine capital's famously inexpensive shopping malls.

Other members of the victorious Club at the Hyatt Saipan team were Lt. Gov. Diego Benavente, Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex

Sablan, Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Carlos Salas, Camacho's SPG teammate Nick Sablan, former resident Richard Heidemann (husband of former Philippine Consul General Julia Heidemann), Pacific Trading Co. general manager Charles Cepeda, Rex Palacios, Timothy Brasuell, Juan Reyes, Frank Castro, Renato Babalones, Sung Wook Lee, Manny Alvarez, Bob George John Matsumoto, John Santos, Matt Araki, Frankie Pangelinan, Daniel Harding, Mike Pai, Mark Hanson, Belle Grandinetti, Liz George, and Yoko Togawa.



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Saipan Tribune Sports

James, Ilgauskas lead Cavaliers over Wizards

LeBron James scored 24 points, Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 21 and the Cleveland Cavaliers won their third straight game after an 0-3 start, beating the Washington Wizards 105-74 Saturday.

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28 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2004

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Chiefs complete season of perfection

By BRAD E. RUSZALA
REPORTER



The Shell Chiefs' offense was able to put a couple of drives together to pull out a 12-2

victory against the Verizon Nitro to complete their undefeated season, in the sloppiest game of the 2004 Commonwealth Football League's fourth season.

Both of the defenses dominated the CPA Airport field last Saturday, but while the Chiefs were able to keep their end zone Verizon free, the Nitro surrendered touchdowns in the first and third quarters, that proved to be the difference.

Without the services of quarterbacks Clasley Ngeskebei and Danny Punimata, the Chiefs once again put the offense in the hands of Bryant Moors, while his statistics do not jump off of the page, Moors did what he had to do to get his team the win. On a couple of occasions, Moors found himself in the grasp of multiple Nitro defenders and managed to toss the ball to awaiting receivers.

In one instance he was able to get the ball out to a well-positioned Stanley Iakopo, and the league's leading rusher was able to scamper to the outside for a 22-yard touchdown that gave them the 12-2 lead.

On the day, Moors went 3-for-13 for 58 yards through in the air, including a 19-yard strike to Luka Tapua'ialupe for



George Lieto and the Verizon Nitro offense walks off the field after being stopped by the unyielding Shell Chiefs defense.

BRAD E. RUSZALA

a touchdown. Moors also had a pair of interceptions, and while both teams had difficulty with their passing games, the Chiefs relied on their running game to put points on the board and take time off the clock.

The high-octane Chiefs run-

ning attack that had averaged just less than 110 yards per game was only able to accumulate 77 yards on the day. Iakopo once again led the Chiefs on the ground, but was held to 35 yards on 11 carries and a touchdown—well below his average. In the absence of Jeff

Boyer, running back Paul Guerrero got plenty of touches, as big No. 4 churned out 25 hard yards on 13 carries.

The Nitro also had a receiver at the helm, as George Lieto was tasked to lead his team. Unfortunately for the white and

red, Lieto didn't find much success through the air, completing 2-of-9 passes for -3 yards. Lieto made up for his lack of an air attack with a few scintillating runs. Number 88 ran seven times for 51 yards on the day, including a 41-yarder.

Running back Simon Sebuu ran six times for 23 yards, but go-to-guy James Hargrove was held to 15 yards.

While the Verizon offense had some difficulty putting points on the board, their defense provided some assistance when John Sablan and Juanis King were on the scene to record a safety for the Nitro in the second quarter.

Jesse Sablan and Jack Aldan were wreaking havoc on the Chiefs as well, as Sablan, racked up seven tackles and a sack, while Aldan had five stops and two sacks.

The Shell curtain didn't do too bad either, as they didn't allow the Nitro offense a score in the contest.

Whenever Lieto tried to get something going for the offense, a sea of red and gold was waiting. Paul Camacho seemed to be on the other side of the line of scrimmage before Lieto could take his first step away from the center.

Camacho pierced through the Nitro line as if it the big guys weren't even there. He finished the game with 4.5 tackles, but teammate Chico Reyes led all of the Chiefs with 7.5 on the day.

The playoffs get underway this weekend, as the Miller Barbarians (3-3) host the Verizon Nitro (0-6) on Saturday, Nov. 20, at 10am. The winner earns the right to take on the Shell Chiefs (6-0) in the championship the following weekend on Saturday, Nov. 27, at 10am.

Hyatt GM elated on Manila trip

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER



Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Michael von Siebenthal

was elated that the Garapan landmark was able to bring home the bacon, so to speak, in the 2nd Annual Club at the Hyatt Golf Tournament held at the Sherwood Hills Golf Club on Oct. 29-30 in Tagaytay City, Philippines.

"We're very happy about the results. We're very happy our Club at the Hyatt members were able to win the tournament and bested their counterparts from Manila and Guam, especially Guam," he said.

Guam topped last year's inaugural tournament between the three hotels but lost steam this year finishing in third place behind Saipan and Manila. Local golfers got a boost



MARK RABAGO

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Michael von Siebenthal, right, proudly holds up the 2nd Annual Club at the Hyatt Golf Tournament cup at the Garapan landmark's entrance last week. He is joined in the photo by the hotel's food and beverage director Sam Cheng.

with the participation of 2003 Suva South Pacific Games veteran Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho, B flight specialist Diego Blanco, and women's ace golfer Noriiko Togawa.

Club at the Hyatt members from Saipan wound up with 1,410 in two rounds to finish ahead of Manila, which had 1,428, and Guam, which had 1,457.

Saipan led from the get-go, as its players combined for a superb 707 in the first day of competition compared to 719 for Manila and 743 for Guam. It didn't end there as Saipan made it two-for-two the next day amassing a score of 703 to once again top the three-team fight, while Manila and Guam could only muster 709 and 714, respectively.

Camacho, Blanco, and Togawa also finished with the best scores in their respective divisions. Camacho fired a 132

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in two rounds to win Class-A,

North Stars, Kautz Glass earn weekday wins

By BRAD E. RUSZALA
REPORTER

The Heinz & David North Stars and the Kautz Glass Glazers triumphed on Thursday to edge closer to the first place Speaker Fitial Pirates in a bonus day of baseball in the fall edition of the Saipan Major League at Francisco M. Palacios field in Oleai.

The North Stars received six strong innings from pitcher Brandon Santos, and reliever Ricky Jones picked up the win when his offense provided the necessary runs to help him finish the job to knock off the black and gold, 8-6.

With the win, the second place North Stars (4-3) moved within a half game of the Pirates (4-2), with just a couple of games remaining in the season.

Santos allowed four runs

off of five hits and fanned six through six innings, while Jones gave up a hit and a pair of runs through three innings.

The game was all tied up at four apiece after the sixth inning before the North Stars followed up a couple of Pirates miscues with three hits and a sacrifice fly to take the 8-4 lead.

Jones had some room to work with when he came into game in the bottom of the inning, and though he surrendered two scores in the bottom of the ninth inning, he was able to end the game with his fifth strikeout.

North Stars' slugger Ben Jones had the big stick for his team, going 2-for-5 with two base knocks, a run batted in, and a pair of plate cross-

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ings, while teammate Martin Camacho entered the game in